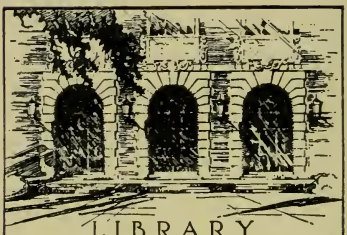

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
M5832
v.4

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2009 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

http://www.archive.org/details/microcosm04acto

THE

MICROCOSM.

THE

MICROCOSM.

BY THE AUTHOR

OF

VICISSITUDES IN GENTEEL LIFE.

" As thoſe who have intemperately revelled in the ſunſhine of
" proſperity taſte ſubſequent adverſity in all its bitterneſs, ſo the
" modeſt ſufferer enjoys the moſt exalted happineſs when the
" early ſtorms of life are ſucceeded by a bright horizon."
" It is from incidents in common Life that we muſt take both
" warning and example. The Great and Terrible are more cal-
" culated to create wonder than to convey inſtruction."

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

London:

PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN, IN THE POULTRY.

1801.

By T. Gillet, Salisbury-ſquare.

S.r Edw: Littleton Bar.t

823
M5832
v. 4

CONTENTS.

VOL. IV.

Page.

CHAP. XCI.

The Return to London 1

CHAP. XCII.

Rose-Valley 12

CHAP. XCIII.

Two Ladies whose Freedom of Manners injure the Reputation of their Friends 29

CHAP. XCIV.

The Confederacy formed 42

CHAP.

Page

CHAP. XCV.

The Confederates detected 51

CHAP. XCVI.

Miſs Montague and the Marquis of Hillington 65

CHAP. XCVII.

A Love-letter and the Reply 74

CHAP. XCVIII.

A ſecond Apology for Chriſtianity; or the Gentlemen unmaſked 87

CHAP. XCIX.

A Converſation, and a Prelude to an extraordinary Event 113

CHAP. C.

A laſt Farewel to Miſs Harriet Montague, to the Conſequence of whoſe Death we muſt now attend 124

CHAP.

Page

CHAP. CI.

The Letter communicated 137

CHAP. CII.

The Discovery made known to the Spencers 167

CHAP. CIII.

The Gentlemen sail for the West-Indies 188

CHAP. CIV.

Mr. Clifford proceeds to Windsor 197

CHAP. CV.

The Meeting of the Friends 214

THE

THE

MICROCOSM.

CHAP. XCI.

The return to London.

SOON after Mr. Herbert's return to Philadelphia, a paſſage was taken for himſelf and family in a commodious veſſel named the Levant. After a voyage of ſix weeks, they were ſafely landed upon Engliſh ground, and immediately proceeded to an elegant houſe, which the Biſhop of Chicheſter had previouſly provided for their reception, in Pall Mall.

The emotions Harriet experienced at finding herſelf in London after an abſence of three years, can beſt be imagined by

thoſe who are well verſed in the feelings of love and friendſhip. Only a ſhort day's journey from people whoſe affection ſhe had prized far beyond the value which, independent of that affection, ſhe had ever ſet upon her own exiſtence, yet not daring to ſee them, nor to inform them of her being in the Kingdom ! ! It even ſeemed neceſſary to take every poſſible precaution to prevent their knowledge of her return : the name of Mansfield was therefore continued, and as ſhe was acknowledged to be Mr. Cumberland's *adopted niece*, no one doubted of her being, in ſome degree, really related to him.

Almoſt perfectly ſecluded, though in the midſt of a gay Metropolis, did our favorite live for a conſiderable period, with an aching heart. In her ſolitary hours, the images of Seymour and Lucy perpetually haunted her imagination, and ſhe read every newſpaper with a trembling avidity, under the expectation of meeting with ſomething relative to Beverly ; for ſhe knew by her own age, which

which was juſt now twenty-one, that Mr. Seymour was not yet maſter of Martin's Priory, he being but ſix months her ſenior. Her wiſhes to know if Mr. Spencer was ſtill living, created a conſiderable part of her anxiety; ſhe having for that venerable man, more than a filial reverence, for ſhe conſidered him as the greateſt and beſt of the human ſpecies—as ſomething of an Angel in the garb of mortality.

It was long before Harriet met with any thing relative to the vicinity in which concentrated all her ideas; but at laſt ſhe read the following paragraph in the general evening poſt.

"Yeſterday was married at Beverly, Sir "Robert Ethlington of St. Oſyth, to Miſs "Symonds, author of a late celebrated "novel. The bride's nuptial father was "the venerable Mr. Spencer; a man ſo "revered by all who have any knowledge "of him, that his preſence would be con-"ſidered as an honor to a royal enter-"tainment."

No young lawyer called to the Bar—no young clergyman inducted to a conſolidated crown benefice, nor puerile lieutenant advanced to the rank of poſt captain, was ever more faſcinated by the appearance of his newly acquired conſequence in print than was Miſs Montague by the peruſal of the paragraph above given. Again and again ſhe read it, with earneſtneſs; then ſeemed to reſt her eye upon every ſingle word; then laid it down and pondered. Her generous heart rejoiced in the good fortune of Miſs Symonds, for whom ſhe had a ſincere regard, but ſhe rejoiced more to find that Mr. Spencer was ſtill alive, and well enough to be preſent at ſuch a ceremony. Yet of what avail was this to her! She, probably ſhould never ſee him again!!! This was ſuch a ſtab to the pleaſure ſhe had juſt imbibed, that it quite overpowered her, and ſhe burſt into a paſſion of tears, in which ſhe continued till her ſpirits were entirely exhauſted. In this ſituation ſhe was found by Mrs. Herbert, who exerted

all

all the soothing powers of friendship to calm the agitated breast of the lovely mourner, without knowing that any recent incident had disturbed her tranquillity.

Soon after this period, a letter arrived from Mr. Frank Herbert, announcing the death of Mr. Cumberland, with a duplicate of his will; which constituted Mr. Herbert his sole executor; gave all the business of the firm into his hands, and disposed of some legacies amongst his friends and dependants; one of which was to his new assistant, Mr. Frank, and another, evincing his generous regard for suffering merit, *to his adopted niece, Miss Harriet Mansfield*, of no less a sum that ten *thousand pounds*; for which she was to receive immediate security, and payment at the end of six months. The large residue of his fortune he gave to Mr. Herbert, by which means that gentleman was at once fixed in a state of affluence.

The pleasure Mrs. Herbert derived from the bequest of Mr. Cumberland to her dear

Miſs Montague, can only be conceived by ſpirits of the moſt exalted order. Far from looking upon it as a diminution of her huſband's benefit from that gentleman's will, it appeared to her as an added advantage. Her friend, would now be independent without any oppreſſion to either her generoſity or delicacy, which could not have been the caſe had Mr. Herbert's power to have rendered her ſo been ever ſo great. Mrs. Herbert indeed was fully convinced that her friend would not have received ſuch a ſum from him, becauſe ſhe would have looked upon it as encroaching on the rights of his children. Mrs. Herbert now alſo felt that her beloved companion could no longer entertain any ſcruple of remaining with her on account of being expenſive, and ſhe contemplated with delight their future happy hours. Mr. Herbert's ſentiments were perfectly congenial with thoſe of his wife. But generoſity, in this caſe fruſtrated it's own plans: for no ſooner was Harriet made acquainted with the gift

of

of Mr. Cumberland to herſelf than ſhe reſolutely declined acceptance: nor could the united entreaty of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, though tears accompanied the perſuaſions of the latter, prevail with her to recede from her determination.

That their circumſtances were rendered convenient, was to her, ſhe averred, matter of complete joy, and her gratitude to the good teſtator would never ceaſe: but would *ſhe*—introduced to his knowledge, only by their humane protection, accept of that, which but for their clemency had been their own! "No, indeed!" And ſhe hoped that they would not think ſo deſpicably of her as to believe any argument or circumſtance could induce her to alter her reſolve. It was in vain that they urged Mr. Cumberland's having an entire right to diſpoſe of every ſhilling of his property, and that it was to her *merits*—to the *affection* he had imbibed for her, *more* than to her circumſtances, that ſhe owed the remembrance:—ſtill ſhe inſiſted that had they not intro-

duced her to him, the whole, as Mr. Herbert was reſiduary legatee, would have been their own. Unable to ſilence their remonſtrances in any other way, ſhe aſſumed a look of firmneſs and declared, that if they perſiſted in enforcing her acceptance of Mr. Cumberland's very kind, but unreaſonable donation, ſhe would withdraw herſelf from their knowledge and endeavor to eſtabliſh herſelf in ſome profitable occupation, hoping that ſhe never ſhould deem herſelf above any reputable employ ſuitable to the humility of her circumſtances.

Mr. Herbert now ſuddenly relinquiſhed perſuaſion and told her ſhe ſhould be obeyed, upon condition that ſhe would promiſe to continue with them, and receive the annual ſtipend which ſhe had not refuſed from Mr. Cumberland during his life. With this propoſal, after a moment's heſitation, ſhe complied; and, her mind being deeply impreſſed with the almoſt unexampled kindneſs of her friends, retired to her own apartment, leaving Mr. and

Mrs.

Mrs. Herbert in high admiration of her noble and diſintereſted conduct. Mr. Herbert ſaid, that when he perceived how determined ſhe was in her refuſal, he immediately reſolved upon a plan of his own, which was to put out the money upon good ſecurity in her name, and to keep an exact account of every ſhilling for her future benefit. Mrs. Herbert rejoiced at this intended proceeding, and the ſubject ſubſided to the ſatisfaction of every party. But Harriet, ſoon afterwards, accidentally heard ſome few words paſs between the gentleman and lady that gave her ſuſpicion of the meaſures they had taken. As a farther conteſt, however, would have been painful to them all, ſhe declined noticing it at that period, knowing that ſhe could at any time counteract what they might have ſettled in her favor.

Miſs Montague now began ſeriouſly to reflect on the real ſtate of her finances. She remembered having been told that her mother had left in the hands of her grand-

mother eight hundred pounds, which ſhe believed had been transferred to Mr. Ruſſel's management, and ſhe was half determined to give authority to have it demanded. But then ſhe recollected that it was in the power of the people at the Lodge to make what charge they pleaſed for her board and education, little as the latter had been an object with them of attention or expence. She could not endure the idea of a conteſt. She could not alſo conſent to have it known that ſhe was in England. She was eaſy in her preſent circumſtances, and now under no apprehenſion of being inconveniently expenſive to her protectors; and ſhe could claim her fortune at any future neceſſitous period. Theſe were her ſoliloquizing reaſonings, and upon them ſhe founded her reſolutions.

And now there are ſome of our readers who will ſay Miſs Montague acted a very unwiſe and romantic part. "That the girl "was a *fool!* an *idiot!* to deſpiſe the poſ-"ſeſſion of ſuch a fortune! of a fortune

"which

" which would at once have ſet her above
" everybody! That ſuch idle ſentiments
" as honor, and gratitude, and generoſity,
" ought to give way to the more material
" conſideration of ſelf-intereſt, which is
" ſurely the intereſt moſt neceſſary to pur-
" ſue, through this ſtate of exiſtence!"

We are not, we confeſs, capable of arguing with ſuch ſubtle reaſoners as theſe. Without their *perceptions*, we are ignorant of the value of the goods which they moſt prize, and are even abſurd enough to ſuppoſe that there are many commodities of much higher regard. We will leave them therefore to condemn our Harriet, while we advert on other circumſtances.

CHAPTER XCII.

Roſe Valley.

IT was not till the day after the buſineſs of our laſt chapter was ſettled that Mrs. Herbert had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing the brother whom ſhe had ſo much reaſon to love and reſpect. At the time of their landing, he was in Weſtmorland, where he was detained by buſineſs of conſequence, and whence returned through Warwickſhire to make ſome neceſſary arrangements upon the conſiderable eſtate of which he had lately taken poſſeſſion. Theſe arrangements were ſo ſingular that we will ſtop to take ſome little notice of them before we introduce the gentleman into Pall Mall.

Upon Frederic's firſt arrival at the manſion-houſe on the eſtate called Roſe Valley, left by the laſt owner in a decayed condition, he ſummoned a meeting of the tenants, and heard

from

from them great complaints of oppreſſion; moſt of them ſaying they were ſo highly rented that it was with difficulty that they could make their payments. He liſtened attentively to the account of their grievances; promiſed to take the circumſtances into conſideration, and diſmiſſed them with expectations of his future kindneſs.

The next day this young landlord made inquiries amongſt the neighbourhood of thoſe people who were not intereſted in the buſineſs, and from their report he found that moſt of the complaints had a foundation in truth. He procured, therefore, two land-valuers to make an eſtimate of all the farms upon the eſtate, to be ready for him on his return from Weſtmorland. At this time he ſettled every thing to the entire ſatisfaction of himſelf, his tenants, and all his dependants, but in a manner highly diſpleaſing to his greater neighbours, who not being diſpoſed to imitate, thought themſelves injured by his example.

Frederic,

Frederic, in the firſt place, divided his farms into ſmaller lots, and ordered ſome of the houſes which latterly had been occupied by laborers, to be re-fitted for larger families, while for the laborers he directed that comfortable little cottages ſhould be erected. Finding ſome of the farms really over-rented, he reduced their rates, and diſpoſſeſſed, as ſoon as poſſible, thoſe tenants who had hired them by auction over the heads of their predeceſſors; recalling the late occupiers to their former habitations. As no part of the eſtate had, for many years, been under leaſe, it followed of conſequence, that the land in general, was in very bad condition, as it cannot be ſuppoſed that a tenant dependent on the caprice of human nature, can, with prudence, enrich that ground from which another may gather the benefit of what he has expended. Frederic, therefore, as well from policy as principle, gave ſuch leaſes on his farms as inveſted the farmer with a ſufficient intereſt in the ſoil,

which

which he tilled, to encourage him to improve it, and, by the same act; to consult his landlord's benefit and his own.

Frederic's next endeavor was to secure to the tenant the tithes of his own farm, as he knew that when these were gathered in kind, it operated as a discouragement to improvement. The accomplishment of this part of his plan, gave him but little trouble. The avarice of the rector, from which he had apprehended obstruction, facilitating the attainment of his wishes. The divine who was pretty far advanced in years, with a mind still wedded to this lower world, looked up to Frederic, the patron of the benefice, as to the future patron of his son who was intended for the church; and he consoled himself for the sacrifice which he now thought it prudent to make, by the consideration of its eventually redounding to the interests of his family. Frederic, therefore, soon saw an agreement made between the parson and his parishioners for a moderate composition during a limited

term

term of years, and thus completed his plans for the future benefit of both himself and his tenants. Leaving Rose Valley and followed by the blessings of his dependents, he now hastened to London, in consequence of the letter which he had received two days before by a circuitous channel, informing him of the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert.

The meeting between the brother and sister was such a one as our affectionately disposed friends will readily conceive: nor was that between the two gentlemen much less tender, as they had ever been united by the bonds of the most perfect congeniality. The day of meeting was spent by the trio in the most complete satisfaction; the alteration of their circumstances causing each to rejoice for the sake of the other two. Harriet as usual employed herself in a room called the nursery, where she constantly attended the children; instructing them in what their young minds were capable of imbibing; not, however, encumber-

ing

ing their heads with a profuſion of ideas; a method too frequently purſued by thoſe who undertake the tuition of young people. Almeria, the eldeſt, was now turned of five years of age. Her abilities were ſtrong; her imagination lively; and ſhe liſtened to her lovely inſtructreſs with an attention ſeldom obſervable in one ſo young. Mrs. Herbert was conſtantly with Miſs Montague in the nurſery, except when obliged to attend her viſiters in the drawing-room, where it was but ſeldom that ſhe could prevail with her friend to appear. Miſs Montague's mind was inſenſible to mere amuſement; and, ſhe dreaded an accidental encounter with any of her former acquaintance.

Frederic's lodgings were not far from Mr. Herbert's houſe, where he was frequently a viſiter, and which he entered without ceremony. For the firſt two or three days, he found his brother and ſiſter in the drawing-room, to which the children had been brought for their uncle to ſee:

but

but of Miſs Montague he had only heard, and that by the name of Mansfield. For ſo true had Mr. and Mrs. Herbert been to the confidence of their friend, that neither Frederic, nor the Biſhop of Chicheſter himſelf looked upon her in any other light than that of a relation to Mr. Cumberland, *by whom ſhe had been left ten thouſand pounds.* This laſt circumſtance, which Mrs. Herbert induſtriouſly propagated, gave Harriet more conſequence with the generality of their acquaintance than all the merits which ſhe ſo eminently poſſeſſed. Lord Chicheſter, indeed, and Lady Herbert, had ſeen, admired and loved her for the ſenſe and ſweetneſs which marked her firſt appearance: but the daughter whom Lady Herbert had by her former huſband, beheld her with different ſentiments; and no wonder, for never were two human beings more oppoſite to each other than Miſs Harriet Montague and Miſs Bridget Herbert. This lady, now ſomewhat upwards of thirty, had long been determined to be married to

ſomebody;

somebody; and having failed in several attempts she formed a plan of going, *in a dashing style*, to Weymouth, during the bathing season. It was, in her own opinion, her *dernier resort*. She went. She succeeded at first, but eventually failed. Her lover, a man of fashion, who had run through a competent fortune, was attracted by the *eclat* of her appearance, though disgusted by her manners. Being pressed, however, for ready money, he made his offer, and the lady not thinking it politic to be cruel, it was immediately accepted. A short period would probably have rendered the repentance of both parties vain: but Miss Bridget thinking herself secure ceased to be properly cautious. Observed by her lover, without the disguise, which she usually assumed, she so far excited his abhorrence as to induce him to take an abrupt leave of Weymouth, of his bride elect, and to withdraw himself for ever from her enquiries.

We will not follow Miss Herbert in her vexation,

vexation, but return to the period of her ſeeing Miſs Montague. To this amiable object ſhe imbibed an inſuperable diſlike; and inſtantly reſolving to tarniſh the brilliancy of her reputation, behaved to her with the moſt ſtudied civility; a civility, Harriet was ſedulous to return, though ſhe could not mix her mind with that of Miſs Herbert.

Soon after Frederic's arrival in town, he went one morning to the houſe of his brother, as with more affection than faſhion he always termed Mr. Herbert, and finding the viſiting room empty, he deſired a ſervant to precede him to the nurſery; where he found Mrs. Herbert, Harriet, and Miſs Biddy, that being the appellation which by her own deſire was given to Miſs Herbert by her intimates.

After proper introductions, the gentleman took a ſeat with the ladies and a lively, entertaining converſation enſued; for Miſs Biddy was perfect miſtreſs of faſhionable ſmall-talk, and paſſed with people of ſlight

diſcernment

diſcernment for *a very clever woman.* Mrs. Herbert was all gaiety, and Harriet ſeemed happy in the apparent happineſs of the ſurrounding friends. In a ſhort time Mr. Herbert appeared, and the pleaſantry of the hour increaſed. They chatted till near the time for dining, when Miſs Biddy, who had an engagement ſhe could not diſappoint, took her leave and Harriet politely attended her down ſtairs. As the two ladies walked acroſs the room, the eyes of Frederic followed them till the door cloſed, and after a few moments ſilence, during which time he ſat as if in profound thought, he turned to his ſiſter and ſaid—" Surely " Miſs Manſfield is one of the moſt beauti- " ful creatures upon Earth !"

" Her beauty is her leaſt perfection," replied Mrs. Herbert. " Indeed it is, re- " joined her huſband. Her mind is far " ſuperior to her appearance."

" Then ſhe certainly can be nothing leſs " than an Angel," ſaid Frederic.

" She *is* an Angel, if ever there was one " in

" in the form of a woman," replied Mrs. Herbert with a ſmile.

Anecdotes of Miſs Montague's ſenſe and goodneſs were now related, and Frederic, who ſeemed convinced that his ſiſter had brought home a treaſure that was ineſtimable, ſaid—" My friend Lord Andover, of " whom I talked to you yeſterday, defies " the power of beauty; but were he to " ſee Miſs Mansfield, I think that he would " confeſs its influence and own that no " region under Heaven could produce a " lovelier woman."

" Is your friend a handſome man?"—aſked Mrs. Herbert.

" You ſhall ſoon judge," replied her brother, " for I had this morning a letter " from him to congratulate me on your " return; and likewiſe to inform me that " he intended to be in town as ſoon as " his buſineſs in the country will per- " mit."

" Where is he now?"—aſked Mr. Herbert.

" At

"At an eſtate near Cheſter."—replied Frederic.

Juſt then Miſs Montague returned; and ſhe appeared in the eyes of her friends ſtill more charming than when ſhe left the room; a circumſtance which our readers will probably attribute to the review which had been taken of her merits. But this was not altogether the caſe; for though ſuch a review could not but have an effect of that nature, with people who admire the *ſoul* of beauty; yet the charms of Miſs Montague had actually been heightened by an increaſe of animation, derived from a cauſe, which it will be neceſſary for us to explain. Extraordinary, then, as the aſſertion may appear, the effect in queſtion, was occaſioned by the malevolence of Miſs Bridget. This lady, whoſe diſcernment in ſuch caſes was particularly quick, had clearly perceived that Frederic beheld our Harriet with high admiration; and as he was a handſome, ſenſible, accompliſhed young man, with a good eſtate,

Miſs

Miſs Herbert could not ſuppoſe it poſſible, that he could be looked upon with indifference by any woman to whom he directed his attention. From this conſideration ſhe determined to ſuppreſs by all the means in her power the attachment at its very birth, and thus not only to gratify her love of miſchief, but to provide alſo for the ſecurity of her own intereſts. For ſhe now began to think that the gentleman would be a ſuitable huſband for herſelf. Some years back, ſhe had condeſcended to think of him: but his fortune was then ſmall, and ſhe fancied that ſhe had better proſpects. She had not ſince ſeen much of him; and his altered circumſtances gave him ſuch additional charms, that ſhe was now reſolved on monopolizing his affection. She began her manœuvres then by ſaying, with a gay air to Harriet, as ſhe attended her down ſtairs—"Do you not my dear Miſs "Mansfield, think this Frederic the hand-"ſomeſt young fellow in exiſtence?"

Henry Seymour now darted into Harriet's

riet's idea, and she hesitated. At length—"Yes—Yes," stammered she out, "he is "very handsome," and sighed. Miss Herbert fixed her eyes upon Harriet's face, with a ferocity which marked her features, and said—"So, so, young lady! you are "caught I find; but let me caution you. "The gentleman is soon to be married to "a very deserving and beautiful woman, "who is one of the greatest friends I have "upon Earth. I am in the confidence of "both."

"*I* caught!" replied Harriet with a blush of resentment. "You are mistaken ma-"dam. But is he indeed going to be "married? I am glad of it."

To the latter part of Miss Montague's speech Miss Herbert gave a smile of incredulity, and in answer to the former said—"Yes; *very soon*. But observe what I "say, or you will ruin us all. His sister "does not yet know one syllable of the "business; so except you wish to make "her wretched, say nothing about it. He,

" himſelf, will tell her of it in due time, " but not quite yet; for as the lady is not " very rich, ſhe may perhaps form ſome " unavailing objections to it. So mind " now. You muſt promiſe me to be ſilent, " till you have leave to ſpeak. I tell *you* " of the affair that you may guard your " heart."

" My heart is not in danger at this " period, I will aſſure you," returned Harriet with a faint ſmile: " nevertheleſs I " own your kind intention, and make the " promiſe you require."

Miſs Biddy fluttered away and Harriet revolved in her mind what ſhe had heard. She had not ſeen enough of the lady to doubt the truth of her aſſertions; and indeed ſhe herſelf was ſo perfectly free from guile, that ſhe was not apt to ſuſpect it in another. The account which ſhe had heard ſhe believed, and ſhe was rather apprehenſive that her friend might be rendered uneaſy by the circumſtance. Thinking however the apprehenſion groundleſs, as

Miſs

Miſs Herbert ſeemed to intimate no other poſſible objection than that of the want of fortune, an objection which Harriet was convinced that his ſiſter would deem a trivial one, ſhe was much pleaſed with intelligence of a nature to ſupply her with no inconſiderable relief. Mrs. Herbert had more than once dropped ſomething about her brother's future wife, which *might* be conſtrued into a wiſh that ſhe were to be the perſon. This had given her ſome vexation as her heart told her that ſuch a wiſh could never be realized; and when ſhe ſaw Frederic, and found that he was exactly calculated to excite her moſt friendly regard, ſhe was ſtill more concerned, and induced by her apprehenſions to throw ſomething like reſerve into her manner and expreſſions. Miſs Biddy's communication had now removed this perplexity; ſhe found herſelf ſuddenly diſincumbered of a weight, and ſhe entered the room with more gaiety than had for a long time en-

 lightened

lightened her countenance: Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were delighted with her liveliness; Frederic seemed fascinated, and the day was spent, without interruption, in the height of chearfulness.

CHAP.

CHAP. XCIII.

Two Ladies whoſe Freedom of Manners injure the Reputation of their Friends.

FREDERIC viſited at Mr. Herbert's almoſt every day, and the cordiality between him and Miſs Montague was evident to all obſervers. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, who did indeed wiſh that an inſeparable union between them might take place, perceived the ſympathy with much ſatisfaction: but they agreed not to take the leaſt notice of it to either of the parties. To Miſs Biddy, it was a poiſoned arrow; and her brain was perpetually upon the rack to give a mortal ſtab to the growing prepoſſeſſion. This increaſed ſo rapidly, that Frederic's manner to Miſs Montague was nearly the ſame as that of a brother to a ſiſter: and Harriet did not make much difference between her treatment of him

and of Mr. Herbert. Almoſt every morning Frederic ſpent an hour or two in the nurſery with the ladies: ſometimes in reading to them while they ſat at work; and ſometimes in hearing Miſs Montague play on a fine-toned harpſichord, which ſhe accompanied with the moſt melodious voice in the world. Sometimes he watched the great facility with which ſhe uſed the pencil, in the production of the moſt beautiful landſcapes, and ſometimes obſerved with admiration, her method of inſtructing her infant pupils, who hung round her with the fondeſt attachment. Nothing yet however appeared on either ſide indicative of a more than fraternal affection; but Mrs. Herbert yielded to the hope that time would give increaſing intereſt to their mutual regard.

Frederic was now ſummoned into the country, where he ſtaid near a fortnight, during which period Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, and Miſs Montague, were induced by an account of ſome very extraordinary wild beaſts,

beaſts, lately brought over, to go to Exeter Change. Here they were accoſted by Mrs. Hubbard and Miſs Eldred; two ladies introduced to Mrs. Herbert by a gentleman who had formerly been very intimate with Mr. Herbert in Jamaica: the firſt was a widow with a handſome jointure; the other a young lady with an independent fortune; and both were deſcended from families of reſpectability.

The manners of theſe ladies were too much diveſted of that delicate timidity which will always be particularly pleaſing in the younger part of the female ſex, but which, as we are ſorry to be obliged to confeſs, is going rapidly out of faſhion—bold and much ſpeaking; loud laughter and effrontery, being now deemed the diſtinguiſhing characters of our women of the ton. Mrs. Hubbard excelled in theſe diſtinctions to ſuch a degree, that thoſe whom ſhe termed *countrified* people began to queſtion her reputation, together with that of her conſtant companion, Miſs El-

dred; but whether juſtly or not, we will not undertake to decide.

Mrs. Herbert received the ladies with the reſpect due to their introducer, (an elderly baronet, uncle to Mrs. Hubbard,) and gave them an invitation to her houſe. Miſs Eldred paid particular attention to Miſs Montague, who returned her civilities with the politeneſs inſeparable from her nature. Soon after this, the two ladies made their viſit in Pall Mall, where they behaved with perfect propriety; and Mrs. Herbert in a few days paid her debt of etiquette: but Harriet, who as much as poſſible kept her reſolution of not mixing with any ſociety out of the family, did not accompany her. The next morning Mrs. Hubbard's uncle called at the houſe and requeſted the favor of Mr. Herbert and the ladies to make a party to a new play, written by a lady with whom they were all acquainted, and who had been left a widow with five children, in diſtreſſed circumſtances. The play was ſo well received by the

managers,

managers, and had ſuch an abundance of merit, that there was but little fear of its not being approved by the audience. To make its ſucceſs however ſtill more certain, her friends had engaged a great number of genteel people to appear at its firſt repreſentation. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Herbert could refuſe a call of this nature; nor could Miſs Montague, averſe as ſhe was to appear in public, be obdurate to ſuch a ſolicitation.

According to the plan agreed upon, the ladies took an early cup of tea in Pall Mall, and Mr. Herbert was leading Mrs. Hubbard to the coach, when his foot ſlipped, and he fell from the flight of ſteps at the door, into the ſtreet. The alarm this incident occaſioned was conſiderable. Mr. Herbert was inſtantly aſſiſted to riſe, but his ancle was ſo violently ſtrained that it was with difficulty he was conducted into the houſe. Finding his inability to eſcort the ladies to the Theatre, he propoſed the expedient of ſending to a gentlemen, with

whom he was intimate, to ſupply his place. But Mrs. Hubbard ſaid that ſuch a meaſure would be quite unneceſſary, as her uncle, though prevented by unexpected buſineſs from coming to Pall Mall, would aſſuredly wait for them at his own houſe, where they had promiſed to call. Mrs. Herbert now made excuſes for breaking her engagement, for nothing could prevail with her to deſert her huſband in his painful ſituation: and it was with difficulty that Miſs Montague was perſuaded to leave her friends: nothing but the particular requeſt of Mrs. Herbert could induce her to accompany the ladies to an entertainment for which ſhe had not at that time the leaſt inclination.

As it was the wiſh of the friends of the author to collect as many favorers as poſſible, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert gave their tickets to their viſiters to diſpoſe of to whom they judged proper. Calling at a milliner's, they aſked if Miſs Craven and Miſs Kerſey were at home, and, being anſwered in the affirmative, they requeſted of the

the miſtreſs that the young ladies might be permitted to follow them to the theatre. With many ſmiles and curteſies, the kind matron acceded to the propoſal, and the miſſes were directed to the ready taken ſeats. Mrs. Hubbard then ordered the coach to the houſe of her uncle, who, ſhe was informed by a ſervant, was obliged to go into the City, and apprehended that he ſhould not be able to diſengage himſelf ſoon enough to fulfil his appointment. Harriet was now alarmed, as ſhe did not like the idea of going to the play without any gentlemen, and earneſtly propoſed the relinquiſhment of the deſign: but her companions, laughing at her cowardice, deſired the coachman to drive on quick.

Our ladies, after many difficulties, arrived at their ſeats, and preſently after were accoſted by the two young milliners, who had dreſſed themſelves as ſmartly as poſſible. Harriet ſhone in the moſt ſimple garb imaginable; and though at her own requeſt, ſhe was ſeated on the ſecond bench,

ſhe ſoon attracted attention from the oppoſite ſide of the houſe. Miſs Bridget Herbert was amongſt the number of thoſe who obſerved her, and was heartily provoked by the encomiums which were laviſhed on her beauty. Noticing the color which adorned the cheeks of the beautiful Harriet and which no art could ſucceed in imitating, Miſs Biddy ſaid to a gentleman who ſat near her—" Did you ever ſee ſuch " a horrid red as that girl has painted her- " ſelf with ?"

" Is that paint madam ?" aſked her companion. " If it be, I could almoſt deter- " mine never to marry except the lady " will promiſe to wear ſuch upon her face, " for never before did I ſee any thing ſo " lovely. Do you know who ſhe is ?"

" No indeed ! but one may judge by " her company that her heart is not ſur- " rounded with ice."

" Say you ſo madam ! I thank you" [bowing and riſing from his ſeat]. " I will " explore the region in which ſhe reigns.

" Perhaps

" Perhaps ſhe can thaw the froſt in my " breaſt; and indeed I already begin to " be ſenſible of ſome warmth."

With the above ſpeech the gentleman (who was young, handſome, and apparently of conſequence) left the box, and almoſt inſtantly appeared by the ſide of Miſs Montague, to the great chagrin of Miſs Biddy, who had been highly pleaſed with the prior converſation of the gallant; and her hatred to the fair Harriet was augmented by this new inſtance of her attractive power.

As ſoon as Miſs Montague ſaw at her elbow the gentleman whom, an inſtant before, ſhe had beheld in converſation with Miſs Herbert, ſhe concluded that he had been ſent to her by that lady with ſome meſſage, and was thus induced to receive him with a ſmiling and attentive countenance. Encouraged by this appearance, he inſtantly ſeated himſelf near her and began a familiar converſation: but on finding that her firſt ſuppoſition of his having been ſent by Miſs Herbert was an erroneous

one,

one, ſhe ſoon looked ſerious and replied with ſome reſerve. This, the gentleman, who was a gay man of the town, conſidered as an artifice to engage him ſtill farther, and judging by the levity of her companions that his freedom would not offend, introduced himſelf to the whole party, who all of them, Harriet excepted, were pleaſed with his company.

Juſt as the after-piece began, another gentleman entered the box and going up to the firſt ſaid—"Curſe me Bob, if I ſuffer "you to enjoy ſuch bliſs uninterrupted. "The fineſt girl in the houſe, poz!"

"Too fine a one for you," replied the other; "ſo prithee keep your due diſ-"tance."

With an inundation of horrid oaths, the gentleman who laſt entered, aſſerted his claim to partake of the ſmiles of the ladies, and ſeizing the reſiſting hand of Miſs Montague while he gazed in her face, ſwore ſhe was a Divinity. The other, who began to ſuſpect he had miſtaken the character

of

of the lovely girl, assumed a serious aspect and told the intruder that the lady was under his protection, and was not to be insulted with impunity. This produced a violent altercation, which so much alarmed Miss Montague, that she earnestly entreated Mrs. Hubbard and Miss Eldred to leave the house before the piece was finished, as, having no gentleman with them, she dreaded the confusion which would ensue at the end of the entertainment. After a little ridicule upon her apprehensions, they complied with her wishes, and the ladies, attended by the milliners and the two gentlemen, who would not be refused the honor of seeing them to their carriage, left the box. All this was observed by Miss Herbert and a Mrs. Pickery (a lady of her own cast, whom she had drawn to her side) with a censorious delight of which such kind of ladies only are susceptible. The next morning Miss Herbert arose to execute a plan, the projection of which had prevented her from enjoying any sleep on the night of her return

return from the theatre, for the deſtruction of the riſing fame of our Harriet:—an exploit by which Miſs Herbert hoped not only to gratify her malevolence, but alſo to brighten her reputation, now tarniſhed by more than one doubtful piece of conduct.

And now, aſſuring our anxious readers that Miſs Montague reached, in ſafety, the hoſpitable manſion of Mr. Herbert, whom ſhe found, as the phraſe is, in a fair way of doing well, though ſtill unable to walk without aſſiſtance, we will allow ourſelves an opportunity of taking that repoſe which ſome ill-natured, and envious critic will perhaps ſay that the peruſal of our writings often procures for our loyal ſubjects. But aſk thyſelf O man! whoever thou art, if thou haſt ability to write a better book than this which we now offer for thy amuſement. Aſk thyſelf ſeriouſly, and do not let the queſtion paſs lightly from thee: If thy conſciouſneſs then anſwer thee truly in the affirmative, uſe properly thy ſuperior wiſdom: judge with tenderneſs, and be charitable

charitable to thoſe who will reverence thy ſuperiority and who cannot be the objects of thy envy. But if to the above queſtion thy heart whiſpereth thee—No—be modeſt; be candid, and leave criticiſm to the wiſer, or to the more pedantic and malicious; for it doth not properly appertain to thy department.

CHAP.

CHAP. XCIV.

The Confederacy formed.

AS ſoon as Miſs Biddy was dreſſed, ſhe ordered a chair and proceeded to the houſe of Mrs. Vickery, who was entitled to the ineſtimable privilege of adding to her name the epithet of honorable; an advantage ſo great, that none but thoſe who poſſeſs it can juſtly eſtimate its value. During the period of breakfaſting, theſe two very virtuous ladies ſettled the preliminaries of the ſcheme for deſtroying the reputation of Miſs Montague; for Mrs. Vickery, who entered immediately into the views of *her friend*, declared that no woman of character ought to be ſeen in her company. Accordingly they made ſeparate viſits through the day, and repeated the ſtory which had been concerted between them—that Mrs. Herbert had brought over from Jamaica a young

young woman of looſe principles; that in company with Mrs. Hubbard and Miſs Eldred, people whom they ſhould think it a crime to be ſeen with; two apprentices of a famous milliner, and *ſeveral* young gentlemen of *notorious* character, this girl had ſupped at a celebrated houſe of entertainment under the piazzas: that Mr. and Mrs. Herbert would not be convinced of the young woman's frailty, though they began to be diſpleaſed with her conduct, as they had from the ſpeciouſneſs of her manner (being themſelves very good kind of people) and from her uſefulneſs in the family, imbibed a ſtrong partiality for her: that however they did not think it right to introduce her into company; and that it was ſuppoſed that they would take the firſt opportunity of ſettling her in ſome other ſituation, for having brought her into England, they deemed it incumbent upon them to make ſome proviſion for her. The fabricated tale was finiſhed with an intimation that Mr. and Mrs. Herbert were careful to

prevent

prevent their ideas and intentions reſpecting her, from being known even to their neareſt friends.

To ſuch of our readers as have been taught to judge charitably of all mankind, and whoſe conſequently blameleſs principles induce them to diſbelieve the accounts which they have heard of the turpitude of individuals *in the Great World*, the characters of Miſs Herbert and Mrs. Vickery will appear to be unnatural. The ſimple and the uninitiated will think that there cannot be found people who will wilfully and premeditatedly ſit down to contrive the ruin of an innocent and amiable young woman, againſt whom they have no cauſe of complaint but that of her being young and beautiful. But my dear friends! your philanthropy, however much it may merit approbation, betrays you, as I am ſorry to obſerve, into wrong concluſions. There *are* in this world, and in this kingdom, the characters which we have drawn. There *are* people who hate ſuch of their fellow-creatures

creatures as are celebrated for thoſe qualities or talents in which they themſelves excel. Beauties deteſt beauties. Rich men, thoſe who are richer. An Earl looks with envy at a Duke: and men of ſenſe are pleaſed at finding a weakneſs in a brother of ſuperior reputation. Nay, even merit grudges merit its renown: the man who deſerves the higheſt applauſe for benevolence, contracts his ſmile when he hears another celebrated for univerſal philanthropy: and the wit when he hears of a riſing genius, attempts to cruſh him in the morning of his excellence! What a ſordid avidity for fame! What an impoveriſhing avarice! "*No brother near the throne*"—has always been conſidered as Turkiſh policy, and we wiſh that we could ſay with truth that it is confined to the expanſe of Ottoman barbarity: but alas! the principle pervades even theſe enlightened regions, and nothing is deemed a more unpardonable preſumption than to endeavor to imitate and approach what we are allowed only,

only, at an humble diſtance, to admire. Look at the contraſt, and behold a man arrived at the ſummit of fame! See him endeavoring to draw after him thoſe who have been attracted by his brilliancy: encouraging them with ſmiles to proceed in his own adventurous tract! Does it not add affection to admiration! And do we not look with increaſed reverence upon the ſtill more highly exalted hero!

This laſt portrait does not bear any reſemblance to Miſs Herbert. *She* was not jealous of an *inferior*. "To what then "tends the expoſition?"—will a critic aſk. Why my good ſir, ſuppoſing you to be one of thoſe elevated geniuſes to whom, in the depth of our humility, we raiſe a quivering eye, we hope that the picture above given of a great man, made ſtill more great, by lenity and candor to a timid follower, will have ſome effect upon—will *ſoften* the *dignity* of *your* conſciouſneſs, and will diſpoſe you to paſs a favorable judgment, or at leaſt a kind ſentence, upon theſe our labors.

What

What advantage would a Fenelon! a Johnſon! a Fielding! a Moore! or even you great ſir! derive from a condemnation of our puny efforts! your works are all ſecure beyond the crook of envy, and it would be in vain, were we to attempt to reach your ſummit. But as to that plump licenciate, with a pompous powdered wig, who now liſtens for your opinion, that upon it he may form his own—let him forbear either to blame or to praiſe what he cannot underſtand.

"*I* never read ſuch trifling things!"
"Give me books of greater *conſequence!*"
"Telemachus; Raſſelas, and ſuch child-
"iſh ſtories are only fit for boys and girls!
"Indeed even when I was a lad, I did not
"delight in ſuch puerile entertainment.
"*My* paſſion for reading concentered in
"homilies, and ſuch kind of ſolid compo-
"ſitions!"

Gentlemen of the above caſt are ſo impenetrable that it is ſcarcely poſſible to make any impreſſion, either on the firmneſs

neſs of their heads, or on the equally ſtone-like lumps which, with ſtoical ſteadineſs, move to and fro in their breaſts. Even the pleaſure which the ſight of beauty creates, and which affects the *minds* of others, never ſinks beyond their *viſion*. At a good dinner, indeed—at ſtreams of vinous juice—at a hoard of precious metal, their ocular orbs, like thoſe of the ſolemn grimalkin watching in the dark for her prey, are ſuddenly enlarged, and admit a kind of voluptuous delight to the moving vehicles above mentioned. But we aſk pardon of our readers for having ſo long digreſſed on characters ſo truly inſignificant.

The ſcheme of Miſs Biddy and Mrs. Vickery was accelerated in it's execution beyond their moſt ſanguine expectations: for the ſtory was circulated and exaggerated with uncommon avidity by thoſe to whom it was at firſt communicated: Miſs Fawcett; Miſs Hannah Drawling; Mr. Jeſſamy Burlington; Mrs. Greenby and Mrs. Snowden, being the judiciouſly choſen emiſſaries

emiſſaries of our two ladies, for the propagation of their concerted malevolence.

Miſs Biddy in a day or two thought proper to make a viſit in Pall Mall, where to her unexpected gratification ſhe found Frederic, who was juſt returned from the country: and to her ſtill greater pleaſure, received information that he was accompanied to town by his friend Lord Andover, mentioned by Frederic in our 87th chapter as a defier of beauty. This young noblemen, who ſhe had once met at Mrs. Snowden's, ſhe was impatient to ſee again, as he appeared to her to be one of the moſt handſome and every way accompliſhed man in the kingdom. Had ſhe indeed thought otherwiſe, ſhe would have been ſingular in her opinion; ſo certain it was that for perfections of both perſon and mind he ſtood unequalled amongſt the nobility. When he was firſt preſented at St. James's, his Majeſty aſked where it was poſſible that he could till that period have been buried—ſo much was he ſtricken by the elegance of

his figure and manners. From that time he was, of courſe, a character of the higheſt celebrity.

The vanity of Miſs Herbert did not riſe ſo high as the conqueſt of Lord Andover; but as ſhe well knew that Frederic and he were ſcarcely ever aſunder, ſhe determined to make him the vehicle of leſſening Miſs Montague in the opinion of his friend; by which means he himſelf, if he ſhould ſee her, would view her with a bad prejudice, and that would prevent the admiration which ſhe was conſcious that ſo lovely a figure muſt otherwiſe excite. Miſs Herbert's emiſſaries were inſtructed to convey their intelligence in an indirect manner to this young nobleman; and this it was no difficult matter to accompliſh, as he was known to ſeveral families with whom moſt of them were acquainted, and had joined in parties of amuſement where they had all met: ſo propitious were circumſtances to the wiſhes of Miſs Biddy Herbert.

CHAP.

CHAP. XCV.

The Confederates detected.

LORD ANDOVER, had been only a ſhort time in Town, before he received, from the honorable Mrs. Vickery, who officiouſly called upon a family, which ſhe knew that he was viſiting, a full account of the particulars intended for his ear. But candid and generous in his diſpoſition he gave ſcarcely any attention to the tale; and ſo provoked the lady by his indifference, that ſhe added many circumſtances, ſtill more flagrant, to awaken his curioſity and conciliate his belief. But her endeavours were in vain; for beſides the nobleneſs of his nature, he was fortified againſt them by his high opinion of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, whom with his friend Frederic, he had now ſeveral times viſited; and who, he was convinced, would not re-

tain in their family, eſpecially in the character of an inſtructreſs to their children, any perſon whoſe reputation was in the leaſt degree impeachable. This he intimated to Mrs. Vickery, and for a time ſilenced her loquacity. Determined however to aſſert the rights of her cauſe by a reinforcement of her allies, ſhe finiſhed her viſit, or as an ingenius writer has properly termed theſe ſhort complimentary interviews—her *vis*, and, without calling a council, proceeded to Mrs. Snowden's, where fortunately for her purpoſe, ſhe met Mr. Jeſſamy Burlington and Miſs Faucett. From the incredulity of Lord Andover, the cauſe was now become her own. He had doubted her aſſertions, and ſhe was determined to enforce his belief. With this view ſhe urged the gentleman and ladies juſt mentioned to be ſedulous in contriving to meet Lord Andover, as it was, ſhe ſaid, of the utmoſt conſequence that he ſhould immediately be made acquainted with the true circumſtances reſpecting the young woman

lately

lately brought over, by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, from Jamaica. The allies promiſed their aid, and performed their promiſe. Lord Andover was ſoon aſſailed at different times by different parties; and was at laſt ſo aſſured, with a variety of circumſtantial aggravations, of the imputed frailty of the guiltleſs Harriet, that he began to waver in his faith. Thinking it therefore proper not to conceal the circumſtances from Frederic, he made the communication with all poſſible tenderneſs to the character of the young lady. But from his friend he received ſuch ſatisfactory replies as convinced him of the falſity of the report, and determined him to aſſiſt Frederic in his declared reſolution of fathoming the utmoſt depth of the calumny.

"I wiſh," ſaid the young lord, "your "ſiſter would give me an opportunity of "ſeeing this lady of whom you ſpeak ſo "highly. What is the reaſon of her being "thus ſecluded?"

"It is far from my ſiſter's wiſhes," replied

plied Frederic, " that ſhe ſhould confine " herſelf. She ſteadily refuſes to be in- " troduced into company, and notwith- " ſtanding the livelineſs of her temper ſor- " row frequently ſteals upon her counte- " nance, and ſeems to diſcover the pain of " ſome diſappointment, which time has not " been able to remove; but both my bro- " ther and ſiſter are ſo fond of her and ſo " delicate in what reſpects her, that I am " unwilling to pain them by aſking any " queſtions upon the intereſting ſubject."

" Poor Miſs Mansfield! I am in love " with her from deſcription," returned Lord Andover.

" Were you to ſee her, you would be " in love with her from ſomething more " than deſcription," ſaid Frederic with a ſmile.

" Then it is well ſhe ſecludes herſelf," ſaid his lordſhip.

" Why ſo?" aſked his friend.

" Becauſe," returned the other " it " would"——at which inſtant the door was

was opened by a ſervant who announced the arrival of company; conſequently interrupted the converſation.

After this, the two friends ſet about a ſerious inveſtigation of the buſineſs in queſtion, and they ſoon traced its origin to Miſs Herbert; for her four coadjutors, when cloſely examined and interrogated, were obliged to give up her name, or to ſuffer the obloquy of the ſlander to reſt upon themſelves. Satisfied with the effect of their reſearch and nearly convinced of Miſs Biddy's being the ſole author of the libel, Lord Andover and Frederic now reſolved to confront her with her own falſehood in ſuch a manner as completely to revenge the cauſe of the injured ſubject of her atrocious deſigns. For this purpoſe Lord Andover ſent a card with his compliments to Miſs Herbert and a requeſt for permiſſion to wait upon her at any time when ſhe ſhould be diſengaged.

Delighted with the circumſtance, ſhe appointed the following morning for the

reception of the young nobleman; employing the intermediate time in preparing herself for his visit, wondering at the unexpected favor, and premeditating the conversation.

When Lord Andover had secured the lady's being at home, he engaged several of his informers to accompany him on his visit. Proceeding to Miss Herbert's at the hour appointed, they were ushered into her drawing room, where she stood aghast at seeing such a levy alight from their carriages. His lordship preceded the procession, and after the first ceremonial bows and curtesies were over, and the company was seated, he immediately entered upon the subject of his visit, by telling her that he was come to request her assistance in vindicating the innocence of a much injured young lady, who from all that he could gather of her character, merited the esteem of the universe. He then mentioned the name of Miss Mansfield, and proceeded by saying, that he was so greatly concerned at having suffered

ſuffered himſelf to believe, and to report to a friend of the lady's, the leaſt circumſtance to her diſadvantage, that he thought it incumbent upon him to make all poſſible reparation, by tracing and cruſhing the foundation of the groundleſs calumny: that he, therefore, upon receiving from every individual of the preſent company an acknowledged recollection of having had the intelligence from her, waited upon her, to unite with them, in entreating her giving up her author; that the malevolent fabrication might be traced and confounded in its origin.

At this addreſs from a man whoſe manners were polite, and pleaſing Miſs Biddy ſat for a moment fixed and motionleſs as a ſtatue. But her face was in the moſt violent agitation; and every feature expreſſed a different paſſion, while perfect ſilence pervaded the apartment, and Lord Andover ſat with his eyes faſtened on her, in expectation of her reply.

The countenance of Miſs Biddy as we

have formerly ſaid betrayed ſomething too much of a ſtrong and fierce character. Her complexion was dark and her cheeks were fluſhed with a high red. She had, however, been reckoned a handſome brunette, and would have had conſiderable pretenſions to ſuch a diſtinction had not ſo much of her mind appeared in her face. At this trying juncture ſhe looked like one of the furies; while ſhame giving place to rage, with that native inſolence which ſhe conſidered as ſpirit and dignity, and with fire flaſhing from her eyes, ſhe exclaimed, "How dare you lord Andover treat me in "this diſreſpectful manner!"

"Diſreſpectful madam!" repeated his lordſhip. "I came to requeſt your aſſiſt-"ance; and I ſhould not doubt of your "readineſs to give it, when your compli-"ance would offer you an opportunity of "throwing from yourſelf a weight of ob-"loquy which I ſhould be ſorry to ſee reſt-"ing upon the name of Herbert."

"My lord this uſage is not to be *borne*.

"*Obloquy!*

" *Obloquy!—throw from myself!*—What " do you *mean!* How *dare* you intimate— " How dare you even *ſuſpect!*" exclaimed the enraged Lady, burſting into a ſtorm of tears, while *her friends* ſat ſtill, not knowing how to act. Lord Andover was pained by the ſcene, and laudable as was his motive for taking upon himſelf the management of the buſineſs, he half repented of the part which he had undertaken. Recollecting, however, that it was highly requiſite to vindicate innocence ſo unjuſtly accuſed; and that it was more proper for him to appear in the affair than for his friend, who was ſo nearly connected with the family, he became reconciled to his office. Riſing from his ſeat, therefore, and approaching Miſs Herbert, he ſaid in a low voice, " It " is exceedingly diſagreeable to me, ma- " dam, to be brought forward by the de- " mand of honour in this buſineſs. My " taſk is now ended. Or have you, Miſs " Herbert any thing to ſay before I take " my leave?"

" I have *this* to ſay ſir," replied ſhe in a rage, " that you have behaved very unlike " a gentleman : that you are an officious " intermeddler : that the character of ſuch " an inſignificant girl is beneath the notice " of a man who preſumes to mix with no- " bility, and that I will not be baſe enough " (looking at the reſt of the company " with indignation) to give up *anybody* to " ſuch inſolent interrogation."

Accuſed by the turn of her eye, Mr. Burlington advanced to the indignant Miſs Biddy, and with a bow that would have rivalled the *congé* of a firſt rate maſter of the dancing ſcience, ſaid—" I hope my dear " lady, you do not include *me* in your diſ- " pleaſure. When *I* firſt conſented to dif- " fuſe.—"

" *Conſented!* ſir! *Diffuſed!* What can " your inſolence be leading to! Would " you inſinuate that I—Monſtrous! Into- " lerable! Do you know who I am ſir! " Too high to be pulled down by any of " you, or to keep your company!" With theſe

theſe words ſhe left the room; and ſhutting herſelf up in her chamber, ſhe was for a conſiderable time nearly choaked with the violence of contending paſſions. Her pride —her plans—her revenge, all brought to the ground, while the impotence of her fury could injure only *herſelf*.

As to the company whom ſhe had ſo abruptly quitted—her departure left them all in the moſt awkward ſituation imaginable. Gazing upon each other, they knew not who ſhould ſpeak firſt, or what to ſay. Lord Andover alone was collected, and he was ſo irritated by the riſing conviction of there being a ſettled plan to defame the young lady whoſe cauſe he had undertaken, that his reſentment kept him for ſome time ſilent. At length, addreſſing the company in general, " I am concerned, he ſaid, at " having cauſe to ſuſpect that there has " been a formed ſcheme to deſtroy a blame- " leſs character. What the motive could " be, I know not: but Mr. Burlington's " addreſs to Miſs Herbert puts it beyond " diſpute

" diſpute that ſomething of this kind has
" been projected. However, I have the
" ſatisfaction of being ſatisfied, that the
" merit of the lady in queſtion is too high
" to be reached by the malicious attempts
" of thoſe, who could enter into ſuch a
" confederacy."

The conſpirators were abaſhed, and again ſtared upon each other; while a lady who had really been innocently drawn in to repeat the ſtory, if ſuch a repetition and innocence are not contradictory terms, eaſily exculpated herſelf from the general accuſation. On this Lord Andover offered his hand to lead her to one of the carriages, and then retiring with a low bow, and without ſpeaking a ſyllable, from the reſt of the company, he left them in a ſituation the moſt awkward imaginable. They knew not whether to go or to ſtay; to be ſilent or to ſpeak. But at length, they broke into mutual reproaches, and departing in conſcious diſgrace, were for a conſiderable period aſhamed to be ſeen in public. As to

Miſs

Miſs Biddy—her ſenſations were too acute to be ſupported, and for ſome time ſhe was in an abſolute frenzy. Diſappointed! Expoſed! Diſgraced! What a ſtroke to a woman of her imaginary conſequence!! But a day before ſhe thought herſelf authoriſed to ſet faſhions, and to preſcribe laws for the regulation of female conduct! Now ſhe muſt hide herſelf from ſociety:—for after this detection, nothing could be more ſhocking to her imagination than the idea of appearing in public, induced as ſhe was by her fancied importance to believe that the affair would be a ſubject of univerſal converſation, even amongſt the higheſt degrees of nobility. In this belief, indeed, ſhe was not altogether wrong: the ſtory really did circulate in the higher ranks, and it was decorated with all thoſe additions which progreſſive tales never fail to acquire. Sometimes this mortified ci-devant toaſt determined to fly into the country; and ſometimes, even to quit the kingdom; but vexation worked an effect which prevented the

the profecution of any of thefe plans of confcious degradation. A violent fever enfued; and after a confinement to her bed for feveral days, fhe appeared fo emaciated, and with fuch a yellow complexion, that it was apprehended that fhe would never regain her former ftate of health. By flow degrees, however, fhe recovered, and though greatly mortified, was not amended by her affliction; for fhe ftill continued to perfecute youth, beauty, and innocence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XCVI.

Miſs Montague and the Marquis of Hillington.

ABOUT the period at which we finiſhed our laſt chapter, an incident occurred, which occaſioned our Harriet to confine herſelf more cloſely than ever. Standing one morning at a front window, ſhe ſaw a carriage ſtop at the door, and ſoon afterwards, a gentleman iſſue forth and enter the houſe. In this gentleman Miſs Montague immediately recogniſed Mr. Percival, and her alarm was extreme. Concluding herſelf to be the ſubject of his purſuit, ſhe haſtened with trembling ſteps to the apartment of Mrs. Herbert, and there ſinking into a chair, ſhe burſt into tears, and was for ſome minutes unable to anſwer the enquiries of her anxious and alarmed friend. When Mrs. Herbert underſtood that Mr. Percival was in the houſe, her

her concern was nearly as great as Harriet's: and the two ladies ſat in almoſt breathleſs expectation of ſome information from below ſtairs. In about half an hour Mr. Herbert entered the room with his uſual gaiety and unconcern: but perceiving that his lady looked at him with eyes of enquiry and ſolicitude, he haſtily aſked what was the matter.

"The matter, Mr. Herbert! Why Mr. "Percival—"

"Mr. Percival! Yes. What of him? "Bleſs me!" continued he, "ſurely not "Mr. Percival of Beverly!"

"Certainly;" replied Mrs. Herbert, "and we are very impatient to know what "brought him hither."

"The gentleman who has been below "ſtairs, and who told me that his name "was Percival, was recommended to me "by Sir William Redgrave. His buſineſs "was to requeſt my ſettling a little affair "relative to the bankruptcy of Whitmore, "with whom he had conſiderable con-

"cerns,

" cerns, and who is gone over to Jamaica." —This was Mr. Herbert's elucidation of an incident which had occaſioned ſuch alarm to Miſs Montague and to her friend.

Thus it frequently happens to the children of mortality. Circumſtances that terrify us and threaten deſtruction to our peace often prove of trivial, and not unfrequently of beneficial conſequence; while proſpects from which we promiſe ourſelves pleaſure and felicity often diſappoint our expectations—and terminate in gloom.

When Harriet was relieved from her apprehenſions ſhe was ſoon reſtored to tranquillity: but the knowledge of Mr. Percival's being in town determined her to keep herſelf a cloſe priſoner. Previous to this occurrence, ſhe had ſometimes indulged herſelf in a ride, with Mrs. Herbert and the children, to Hampſtead, where, in a fine morning, they uſed to walk an hour or two upon the heath. In the laſt of theſe rambles they were accoſted by a gentleman who, as it afterward appeared, had been obſerving

obſerving them from a window near which they had often turned. His manner and addreſs was polite and pleaſing. A dark cloud appearing, he foretold a ſhower, and invited them to take ſhelter in the houſe from whence he had iſſued; but making light of his prediction, they walked on till the event verified his judgment and determined them to accept of his offer. When they entered the houſe they croſſed a ſaloon and were uſhered into an elegant apartment; where the ſtranger, by introducing them to his aunt, Lady Albertina Montroſe, immediately informed them that their new acquaintance was the Marquis of Hillington. The lady, who was pretty far advanced in years, lived entirely at Hampſtead for the benefit of her health. In this retirement ſhe was frequently viſited by her nephew, of whom ſhe was very fond, and as ſhe was extremely deſirous to ſee him married, it was not without pleaſure that ſhe obſerved his attention to a lady whom ſhe had ſeveral times ſeen upon the heath

in

in the ſame company, with attendants that denoted her to be a perſon of faſhion, and whoſe beauty was ſufficient to captivate every beholder.

The ſhower was now violent, and as lady Albertina was deſirous to detain her company, ſhe ordered a collation, and entered into a lively converſation. This lady was very fond of muſic, and though ſhe was not a performer, had purchaſed a grand forte piano, "for the amuſement," as ſhe ſaid, "of thoſe who condeſcended to viſit "an old woman in retirement." Lady Albertina was one of thoſe happy people who, whether married or ſingle are both "uſeful and ornamental" to their generation, and whom, though they live ſpinſters to an advanced age, we ſeldom hear branded with the title of Old Maid.

Lady Albertina aſked Mrs. Herbert if ſhe played on any inſtrument. Mrs. Herbert replied in the negative, but added that Miſs Mansfield was a performer.

Harriet did not thank her friend for this intelligence,

intelligence, which ſubjected her to a requeſt not to be refuſed, that ſhe would oblige the company by touching the inſtrument. She ſat down to it therefore and played in a manner which ſurpaſſed expectation, and made conqueſt complete. The Marquis was fond of harmony, and he gave up his heart without reſerve to that aſſemblage of charms which Miſs Montague unofficiouſly diſplayed.

When the rain ceaſed, the carriage was ordered to the door, and our friends took their leave of lady Albertina and her captivated nephew; the former entreating that they would repeat a viſit which had afforded her ſuch peculiar pleaſure.

After their departure the good lady aſked the Marquis if he did not think Miſs Mansfield rather a pretty woman.

"*Rather a pretty woman* madam!" exclaimed he. "You muſt ſurely jeſt. Had "you aſked if I did not think her the moſt "beautiful creature in the Univerſe, I "ſhould have ſuppoſed that you were ſeri-

"ous,

" ous, and have given you an anſwer in " the affirmative; for ſurely nothing before " did I ever behold ſo lovely."

" So, ſo, nephew!" returned lady Albertina with a ſmile of complacency, " you " are caught at laſt! Well I muſt own I " never ſaw a more charming creature; " and I think her mind is equal to her " appearance."

" I am *ſure* it is," replied he with warmth. " She cannot deceive."

Lady Albertina permitted the converſation to drop. The Marquis continued ſilent for ſome minutes, and at length, abruptly wiſhing his aunt a good morning, returned to town. His firſt inquiries were, reſpecting Mr. Herbert, whom he ſoon underſtood to be a ſon of the biſhop of Chicheſter's. To the biſhop, then, of whom he had ſome knowledge, he applied, and received ſuch an account of the lady who had charmed him, that he determined to addreſs Mr. Herbert on the ſubject. Fortunately for his purpoſe that gentleman arrived

arrived at his father's juſt as the Marquis was about to depart. The good prelate was ſo much pleaſed with the proſpect of this alliance for a young lady, whom he greatly admired, that he facilitated the buſineſs between the young nobleman and his ſon. In the reſult, Mr. Herbert was empowered to make known to Miſs Montague, under the name of Miſs Mansfield, the intention of the Marquis of Hillington to ſolicit her favor.

A ſentiment of ſomething bordering upon revenge, gives us pleaſure when we obſerve that the foregoing circumſtance ſoon reached the knowledge of Miſs Biddy Herbert, and gave her an almoſt mortal ſtab. " It " was *intolerable!* It was *ſhocking* in the " extremeſt degree! To think that a little " trumpery girl *whom nobody knew*—a girl " ſhe *deteſted! abominated!* whom ſhe had " determined to humble, but who had " occaſioned her diſgrace, *ſhould riſe to the* " *rank of a* MARCHIONESS!! She could

" not

" not *ſupport* it! The idea was *death* to " her! What could the family *mean* by " promoting ſuch a *prepoſterous alliance!*"

This was the language of the impotent rage of Miſs Biddy in her ſtate of mortification.

CHAP. XCVII.

A Love-letter, and the Reply.

PLEASED with his embaſſy, Mr. Herbert haſtened to Pall Mall to communicate the tidings to his lady, who, as he well knew, would receive ſincere ſatisfaction from the intelligence. For, though it was amongſt her firſt wiſhes that Harriet ſhould be her ſiſter, yet ſuch was the known diſintereſtedneſs of her affection, that he was convinced ſhe would rejoice at her friend's higher proſpects and be delighted with this offer from a man, who, like the Marquis, united with rank and wealth the poſſeſſion of many great and amiable qualities.

Mr. Herbert was not miſtaken: his lady was greatly gratified by the propoſal, but ſhe was more doubtful than he had been, of its acceptance. On the firſt intimation of

of ſuch a doubt Mr. Herbert expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe, as the probability of Harriet's refuſal of this young nobleman had not occurred to his imagination. He knew of her attachment to Mr. Seymour; but as he likewiſe knew, or believed that he knew, of that gentleman's marriage with Miſs Spencer, he indulged the hope that his fair friend would yield to the various ſuggeſtions of reaſon on this occaſion, and would accept of a ſituation which would at once fix her above the reach of her treacherous relations. But his hope was fallacious: Harriet did not heſitate one moment. With a due ſenſe of her obligation to the Marquis for his partiality, ſhe declined the propoſal; requeſting Mr. Herbert to ſoften the abruptneſs of her refuſal, by preſenting to him at the ſame time the proper acknowledgments of her gratitude.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Herbert ſtrenuouſly urged her acceptance of her noble lover's generous propoſals (for he had offered her a *carte blanche)*, but their inſtances were

in vain. The arguments indeed with which ſhe oppoſed them were ſo juſt and powerful, that they ſilenced, if they could not ſatisfy, her friends.

" What equitable motive," ſhe aſked, " can induce me to accept the hand of " the Marquis? Not the conſideration of " his title; for mere ſound cannot relieve " a ſighing heart. Not his fortune; for " in what want am I of that, while you " afford me your kind protection? Not " even his merit; for the conſideration of " his deſerving more affection than I could " give him, would render me wretched."

" And why my dear Harriet," aſked Mr. Herbert, " cannot ſo ſoft a mind as " your's afford him ſome portion of that " affection which you ſeem ſo well con- " vinced that he merits?"

" Ah! Mr. Herbert!"

" And ah! Miſs Montague! Ought " you not to endeavor to releaſe yourſelf " from thoſe fetters which ſo injuriouſly " confine even your wiſhes."

" Perhaps

" Perhaps I ought ſir. But till that en-
" deavor proves effectual, would it be juſt
" to deceive the Marquis by accepting
" that for which he would expect ſuch an
" affection as on this occaſion it is right
" that I ſhould acknowledge *I never can*
" *afford him.*"

Much more was offered by Miſs Montague in defence of her determination; and what ſhe ſaid evinced ſo much candor, and ſo much truth as well as elevation of ſentiment, united with ſuch a fund of affecting recollection of former ſcenes, that her friends were compelled to acquieſce in the rectitude of her deciſion: and Mr. Herbert, though not without reluctance, undertook to convey the unwelcome intelligence to the Marquis. Softened as the refuſal was by the expreſſions which accompanied it of Harriet's eſteem and gratitude, it affected the lover with the moſt poignant ſenſations. He requeſted Mr. Herbert to procure him an interview with his fair enſlaver; or (upon that gentleman's

intimating that, fixed as Miſs Montague appeared to be, an interview could be productive only of pain to both parties) at leaſt to deliver into her hands a letter. To this laſt propoſal Mr. Herbert agreed, and the Marquis ſitting down wrote as follows.

" It has ever been a favorite argument " with me that happineſs is not confined " to circumſtances, but that every man " carries about with him the means of at- " taining it. But alas! the notion was " vague and fallacious! I give it up. I " diſclaim it. Felicity is no longer mine! " Felicity, I am now convinced, dies with- " out hope. Yeſterday I thought myſelf " the happieſt of ſublunary beings, for, " pardon me madam, I did not ſuffer my- " ſelf to doubt your favor which I was ſo " determined to merit, as I was informed " you were totally diſengaged. I ſuffer " for my preſumption, for to-day I am the " moſt wretched of the human race. I " never was an *enemy* to matrimony, but " till Hampſtead Heath opened a proſpect

" to

" to it, it never appeared *inviting* to my " wiſhes.

" Mr. Herbert confirms your not being " under any engagement, and yet he tells " me that you acknowledge to be fettered " in affection, though he intimates your " having no view of a union with the " happy—the envied man of your heart. " What, after ſuch an information can I " ſay! Why this—your honor, your rec- " titude, is my ſecurity. Give me what " you *can* give me of your affection at pre- " ſent, and I will depend upon the reward, " of the truth and ardency of mine, in a " *future firſt* place in your heart.

" And now madam I muſt ſolicit an " interview: I muſt ſolicit what I cannot " be denied. I therefore will reſt upon " your authoriſing Mr. Herbert to fix the " hour in which I may throw myſelf at " your feet, and re-affirm how ſincerely " and devotedly I am your's,

" With high admiration
" and fervent affection,
" HILLINGTON."

The perusal of this letter gave our Harriet real distress. It was a considerable time before she was sufficiently collected to attempt any reply. Unlike the generality of her sex, she found no pleasure in her power of tormenting a man of merit. She did not wish to sport with the happiness of a fellow-creature: she did not wish to raise her own consequence on the ruins of another's felicity.

The following was her candid answer to the Marquis:

"SIR,

"The generosity of your sentiments demands the utmost explicitness. The "letter I have just now received from you, "does honour to its signature. Could I "accept your proposal, my happiness might "probably be secure through the remaining term of my existence; but that acceptance would at once render me, not "only undeserving of your attention, but "a proper object of your contempt, be-

"cause

" cauſe it is incompatible with common
" honeſty. Perhaps I ought to bluſh at
" the acknowledgment which your truly
" generous method of proceeding urges me
" to make; yet your candor ſhall not meet
" with duplicity. *My heart is not my own*;
" nor do I think I ſhall ever again have
" the power of directing its biaſs. I
" tremble to confeſs this truth, even to
" myſelf, as I would, if poſſible, hide it
" from my own belief: but that examina-
" tion of myſelf, which juſtice to you de-
" manded, has placed it more clearly be-
" fore me than ever.

" And now, my lord, I muſt requeſt
" you to forget that you have ever ſeen
" me. Preſs not the interview, which
" could not anſwer any good end, and
" which would inevitably occaſion me ſuch
" pain as I ſhrink from in idea.

" May you be ſoon, and long happy
" with a woman who will have a due ſenſe
" of your merit, and power to make a

" more ſuitable return to the delicacy of " your affection than,

" Sir, your obliged

" Humble Servant,

" H. M."

After Miſs Montague had finiſhed the above, and given it to Mr. Herbert for the Marquis, ſhe began ſtill more ſeriouſly to conſider the tendency of the continued attachment which ſhe had profeſſed. Attachment to whom! To a married man—to the huſband of her once, nay her ſtill deareſt friend! " O! Heaven."—ſhe exclaimed, with a ſigh which ſeemed to rend her heart, " what—what do I mean!!" After this paſſionate ſoliloquy ſhe threw herſelf upon a ſofa, where reſting her elbow on its arm, and hiding her face with her hand, ſhe ſat upwards of an hour reflecting upon the ſtate of her ſentiments. For the firſt time in her life, ſhe conſidered her continued affection for Henry

Seymour

Seymour as reprehenſible; as almoſt criminal, and ſhe ſtarted with horror at the idea. "And was it then neceſſary that "ſhe ſhould endeavour to abſolutely for-"get him!" "That was impoſſible." "But it certainly was a duty to remember "him with indifference," "Equally as "impoſſible as the firſt." "Yet what "could be the end of cheriſhing her for-"mer ſentiments!" "Could ſhe wiſh "to retain *his* affection!" She bluſhed at the inſincerity of her negative to the ſilent queſtion; and the neceſſity of expelling him from her heart (for ſhe was now convinced that he held there an improper place) appeared too ſtrong to be evaded. This was one of the ſevereſt moments ſhe had ever experienced. To tear Seymour from her boſom, was to deprive herſelf of every thing but bare exiſtence. The melancholy pleaſure with which ſhe uſed to ruminate on paſt events, without a ſuſpicion of its criminality, muſt be given up; and then what was there in life of ſufficient conſequence to form an

object for her thought. Too certainly, in her opinion, nothing, for though she had a fervent affection for Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, and really loved their amiable children, yet they were happy in each other, and would be so whether she was or was not in being. In this dark hour no gleam of comfort appeared!—no opening in the cloud with which she was enveloped. All was impenetrable gloom; for though she did not forget there was a World to come; yet even the prospect of futurity seemed shut against her view, nor could she pierce through the obscurity with all her efforts, which, perhaps, were at this time but feeble, as (to use a language peculiar to our own domains) she was, at this period, enwebbed by terrene affection.

Our readers will not suppose that we mean to commend this disposition of Miss Montague. No; it was doubtless reprehensible; but it was surely venial. Not for worlds would she, in the slightest degree, have injured the now supposed sole possessor of her still too dear Henry's heart;

not

not on any conſideration have diminiſhed the fervency of his affection for her happy friend: yet ſhe could not with perfect truth ſay that ſhe wiſhed to be totally forgotten by him: ſhe could not ſo looſen the tie, which from infancy had bound her, as to prevent involuntary, and perhaps too much indulged retroſpection from impedding the ſoaring of her wiſhes to the abode and company of angels. But, in time, the breathings of her ſoul were heard: her yet imperfect prayers attended to, and her mind opened to the rays of conſolation. The Kind Parent of all created beings ſees the ſtruggles of His weak children, and pities that impotence of Spirit, which their errors or their crimes have occaſioned. He ſees —pities and aſſiſts; raiſes them from the duſt; points out their path, and accelerates their flight to Heaven. Oh! how unimitative of his beneficence are the fellow-creatures of the fallen!! Though liable, and even prone to the ſame guilty follies, they preſs, and cruſh to deſtruction the unfortunate

tunate brother, who has ſlided into the ſnares from which they have been defended or delivered: and they impede his riſe with as much induſtry as if their own welfare would be injured by his reſtoration.

Inſatiate avarice! Is there not Mercy ſufficient for us all! Muſt one loſe, becauſe another receives! No; "He who giveth "liberally and upbraideth not," ſits at the fountain of inexhauſtible Kindneſs. Look up then all ye timid minds—yet trembling offenders! Raiſe the quivering eye of new-born hope—of infant confidence in Him who will not behold with unkindneſs your aſpiring wiſhes.

The mind that is ſincere, though faint, SHALL BE STRENGTHENED.

CHAP.

CHAP. XCVIII.

The ſecond Apology for Chriſtianity; or the Gentlemen unmaſked.

MISS MONTAGUE has been cheared by the all-powerful influence of divine conſolation.

We would not advert to any other circumſtance without reminding our anxious friends of this particular, as it is impoſſible that they can be indifferent to the diſtreſſes of ſuch a woman. We therefore repeat, that though the cauſe of her grief remained, its violence ſeemed to give way to a hope of ſhe knew not what. Againſt her reaſon—againſt probability, a perſuaſion prevailed of ſomething like future felicity. "Yet from whence can it ariſe!" exclaimed the afflicted fair in a whiſper to herſelf, "when every ſource of felicity is totally "locked up." Then ſtarting at her own

"infidelity

infidelity—"But how ungrateful am I! "Have I not been delivered from a de- "ſtruction ſeemingly inevitable! *I have.* "Then how criminal is doubt!" At this ſhe aroſe and retired to a cloſet dedicated to her uſe, where her conſolation increaſed and her mind grew tranquil. She truſted and ſubmitted.

We have before aſked whether the beauty; the good ſenſe; the great qualifications; the ſoftneſs; the amiableneſs of Miſs Harriet Montague will excuſe her to the beaux and belles—to the dignified and undignified characters of the preſent century, for being pious? We fear it will not; and that the confeſſion of her ſentiments will ſink her into contempt with moſt of the laiety, and with even ſome of the clergy of the age. But we cannot help it, as we muſt relate the truth. Beſides it ought to be conſidered that no character is perfect. This little flaw, therefore, this really old-faſhioned diſpoſition will be excuſed, and particularly when it is recollected that ſhe

was,

was, notwithſtanding, extremely lively; that odd as it may appear to many people, her piety far from abating ſeemed poſitively to increaſe the gladneſs and conſequent gaiety of her heart. Whenever the ſenſe of the unpropitious circumſtances of her life was a little diminiſhed, ſhe was the ſpirit of every party in which ſhe joined; the wit with the ſweetneſs; the wiſdom with the modeſty that adorned her mind rendering her the delight and admiration of every one who was ſo happy as to be introduced into her company. Were her friends afflicted? —She ſoothed their ſorrows. Were they diffident?—She gave them conſequence. Were they gay? She entered into their amuſements. But *yet*, the moſt genuine Piety influenced all her thoughts, and actions. AND—*dire diſgrace*—SHE WAS A CHRISTIAN!!!

While Miſs Montague was employed as above related, Mr. Herbert was reading to his lady the letter for the Marquis of Hillington, which ſhe had given to him with a

requeſt

requeſt that her friends would paſs their judgment on it before it was conveyed to his lordſhip. At this juncture Frederic opened the door of the apartment: but, ſeeing them in earneſt converſation, he expreſſed his fear of interrupting them, and was about to retire, when Mrs. Herbert, filled with renewed admiration of her Harriet called him back, and looked at Mr. Herbert, for leave to ſhew him Miſs Montague's reply to the Marquis.

"Is it quite right?" aſked he ſmiling.

"How can it be wrong?" returned ſhe.

"If there be a doubt" ſaid Frederic, "whatever be your intention give it up."

"Your ſiſter muſt be indulged I ſee," ſaid Mr. Herbert, pleaſantly; "and I do "not Frederic queſtion your diſcretion."

As the Marquis of Hillington had not made any ſecret of his attachment and propoſal to Miſs Montague, Frederic was acquainted with all the circumſtances leading to the letter which Mr. Herbert now put into his hands. Having read it with rapturous applauſe, he ſaid that

it

it was exactly consistent with the idea he had formed of the lady upon his first knowledge of her. "But," added he, "I am "extremely concerned to find my suspi- "cions of her not being happy, thus "strongly confirmed. Is the name of the "man honored by her favorable opinion a "secret?"

"At present, yes," answered his sister. "On that head delicacy commands us to "be silent."

"I have done," said Frederic; "yet "anxiously wish to know if there is any "probability of her being happy in her "wishes."

"None! None," replied the lady shaking her head.

"I am sorry for it," said Frederic. "Charming woman! How is it possible "a man can be insensible to such exalted "merit!"

"I wish my dear brother that *you* were "the object of her partiality?" said Mrs. "Herbert.

"Why

"Why ſo?" aſked he.

"Becauſe," ſhe replied, "I ſhould be "happy in having ſuch a ſiſter."

"Why more ſo than in having ſuch a "friend?" he aſked.—At this inſtant Mr. Herbert returned from his ſtudy, where he had been ſealing Miſs Montague's letter for the Marquis; and immediately after, a rap at the door and the announcement of company prevented the reply which Mrs. Herbert was going to make to her brother's queſtion.

For ſeveral days after this, nothing ſufficiently material to be here related occurred to any of our friends. Mr. Herbert delivered the letter to the Marquis, who peruſed the contents with great concern. Being convinced, however, that there was no probability of any change in the ſentiments of Miſs Montague, he at length acquieſced in her deciſion, and dropped any further proſecution of his ſuit. But he continued his acquaintance with the family of Mr. Herbert, and he was much pleaſed

at

at having been introduced to people of ſuch real reſpectability. At the Biſhop of Chicheſter's he ſeveral times met Frederic and Lord Andover, whoſe friendſhip he was greatly deſirous to obtain and eaſily ſucceeded in his wiſhes. They ſoon viſited upon a familiar footing, and to them he confeſſed the pain, which he had felt at Harriet's refuſal of his propoſals; frequently ſaying that though he thought her the moſt beautiful creature in the univerſe, it was her mind that had ſo completed her conqueſt of his affections. The curioſity of Lord Andover to ſee this celebrated lady was now more ſtrongly excited, and he required Frederic to find ſome means of introducing him into her preſence. But this, at the preſent inſtant, it was more than ever difficult to effect, as, ſince the Marquis' viſits at Mr. Herbert's, her wiſh to avoid an interview with him, and her apprehenſion of Mr. Percival's ſecond appearance, determined her to confine herſelf almoſt ſolely to the nurſery, unleſs when the

earneſt entreaties of Mrs. Herbert, who feared that her ſedentary life would be prejudicial to her health, prevailed with her to make an excurſion with the children to ſome one of the ſurrounding villages, under pretence of its being neceſſary for them ſometimes to breathe a purer air than that of Pall Mall.

Frederic and Lord Andover were one morning at Mr. Herbert's, when Harriet, thinking it too early an hour for the appearance of company, was going down into the room where morning viſiters were uſually received, and had juſt reached the door, when ſhe heard the ſound of ſeveral voices. Without ſtopping to liſten, ſhe haſtened back to her own apartment, where, being in a contemplative humour, ſhe ſat down as ſhe too often did, to ruminate on paſt events.

" Where," ſighed ſhe to herſelf, " is " now my deareſt Lucy! Occupied, per- " haps in the duties of a mother! And " where is the happy object of her affec-

" tionate

" tionate attention, *my* once loved Sey-
" mour ! *Once* loved !"—repeated ſhe and ſighed more deeply.—Then riſing from her ſeat, ſhe exclaimed—" Well! it is over ;
" and probably I ſhall never ſee either of
" them again."

How little of probability do mortals know ! How often do they think events at hand which never happen ! and how frequently does the next hour preſent incidents which they had deſpaired of ever ſeeing produced ! Strange that after years of experience, we ſhould ſtill truſt our own judgment—ſtill doubt the gracious ſuperintendence of Providence.

It was far from the belief of Miſs Montague at the criſis above mentioned, ſhe was only a few yards from her Henry—that ſhe was then walking over the room in which he was ſitting—that if ſhe had entered at the door which ſhe was on the point of opening, ſhe would have found him in converſation with Mr. and Mrs. Herbert !

Has

Has the penetration of our readers already pierced the veil, and ſeen their favorite Henry Seymour in Lord Andover? Or has the ſobriety of their imagination been ſatisfied with knowing only what we have thought proper to reveal, without breaking into our ſacred receſſes and making their own diſcoveries?

"O dear!" cries Miſs Kitty, "I have "ſeen that long ago. I have read too "many novels to be ſo eaſily blinded."

As we doubt not but there are many Miſs Kittys in the kingdom, we muſt ſuppoſe that Mr. Clifford has been as viſible in Mrs. Herbert's brother Frederic, as Mr. Seymour in Lord Andover. We will proceed, therefore, to the relation of facts; reverting to a few circumſtances relative to our friends at Beverley.

When we laſt took our leave of that beautiful village, the Cambridge ſtudents were juſt arrived—the Percivals at the Lodge; Henry Seymour, Mr. Clifford, Mr. Barker at the Aviary: the Percivals anticipating

anticipating their grand entry into the envied habitation, but apprehenſive of Stephen's declining health; the other party enjoying with due moderation, the preſent, without repining at the approaching period, which they could not however contemplate with perfect indifference, when the good Mr. Spencer muſt reſign to the lawful heir, the lordſhip of the vicinity. Nor did they on its actual arrival utter one improper or harſh ſentiment, though their feelings were put to a ſevere trial, as the inſolent exultation of the Lodge-family had long been unbounded and even indecent.

In the early part of this work the reader was informed of Henry Seymour's being deſcended from a noble family, but as at that time there was no probability of his inheriting the anceſtorial dignity, we did not think the incident of ſufficient importance to merit a particular illuſtration: but as he is now become the point in which theſe family honors centre, we will give

ſome account of the progreſſive cauſes which led to his titulary aggrandizement.

When our Henry firſt made his appearance on the ſtage where he acts ſo material a part, the elder branch of the family, Viſcount Liſmore, lived upon a large eſtate at Baltimore in our ſiſter Kingdom, at which time he had three ſons and five daughters. To this nobleman on the contingency of his dying without children, Mr. Seymour was indubitable heir: on that of his leaving only daughters, the greateſt part of the eſtate, with the title, was ſtill to be Mr. Seymour's: but the Viſcount long enjoyed the proſpect of his deſcendants riding in carriages with coronets, and ſhining in the liſt of the houſe of peers! In proceſs of time however, he found himſelf without a ſon; his eldeſt loſing his life in a duel fought about a celebrated courteſan; the ſecond dying of a conſumption, and the youngeſt being drowned in his paſſage from Liverpool to Dublin. That this muſt be deemed a misfortune to the family, cannot be

be denied: yet to the daughters, on a pecuniary account, it was an advantage: as the great fortune of their mother, the heiress of three rich uncles, which had been settled upon the eldest son, was now to be divided equally between the young ladies. By the same events these ladies became also entitled to the unentailed estates; of which, had any one of their brothers lived, they would not have had even a share, it being the father's ruling principle to increase, to the utmost of his power, the honors of his house: and thus, the daughters, from the prospect of small fortunes, became the richest co-heiresses in the country.

For some peculiar service rendered by Lord Lismore to the favorite minister, whose influence with the king was unbounded, he was created an English peer by the title of Earl of Andover. Just after this accession of honor, happened the death of his eldest son, which affected him immoderately. On the loss of his other two boys, he fell into a deep melancholy and died about half a

year before the period at which we recognised our old favorite in the new nobleman, whom we left in Mr. Herbert's visiting parlour.

Matters between Miss Spencer and Mr. Clifford were adjusted soon after that gentleman's return from Cambridge: but he was not then possessed of an estate sufficient to enter into conjugal life, and the death of his relation, before-mentioned, was so near the time of Mr. Stephen's arrival at age, that Lucy determined not to change her situation till after the venerable possessor of the Aviary was settled in his new habitation.

It may be asked why Clifford kept his engagement a secret, as it was evident he did, from a sister to whom he was so much attached.

At first he concealed it from a point of affection; for he well knew that both she and Mr. Herbert would strenuously insist upon contributing to his establishment in domestic life, though by doing it they might inconveniently

inconveniently ſtraiten their own circumſtances; and afterwards on their arrival in England, it was his wiſh that they ſhould ſee his Lucy (as the Spencers intended to paſs a few weeks in town in the ſpring) through a perfectly indifferent medium, being convinced that ſhe was exactly calculated to charm both Mr. and Mrs. Herbert. When he ſaw, what he could not avoid ſeeing, that they pleaſed themſelves with an idea of calling the lovely Harriet their ſiſter, he was ſtill more ſedulous to conceal his engagement with Miſs Spencer, leſt viewing her as an obſtacle to their wiſhes, they might be prevented from conceiving for her that partiality, which otherwiſe, he was convinced that ſhe could not fail to obtain from them even in the firſt interview.

Soon after the death of his uncle, Mr. Seymour (whom, henceforward, we ſhall generally diſtinguiſh by the appellation of Lord Andover), being obliged to attend ſome buſineſs in London, relative to his

new affairs, took commodious lodgings near to Mr. Spencer's town-houſe, which was in Groſvenor Square. Walking rather late one night from a part of the City, he perceived, in a narrow and unfrequented alley, ſeveral men apparently engaged in a ſtruggle, but could not hear any noiſe. On ſtopping to liſten, he found that one of them had a handkerchief tied over his mouth, and that the others were evidently endeavoring to do him ſome injury. Fired at this ſight, and heedleſs of conſequences, he darted amongſt them, and aſſiſted the ſtruggling gentleman ſo ſucceſsfully, that he freed his mouth from the handkerchief, and began to expoſtulate with the others upon ſo outrageous an attack.

" Villain !" ſays one of them, who appeared to be a gentleman, " you merit " more than we can inflict, and though " accident has now reſcued you from our " meditated vengeance, you ſhall not long " live to ſport with the miſeries which you " have occaſioned."

Upon

Upon this Lord Andover interfered, and aſked if there was no method of ſettling the animoſity which appeared to ſubſiſt between the parties, without ſuch violence as he had juſt then witneſſed.

" You are a gentleman ſir," ſaid he who had ſpoken before, " and your interpoſi-" tion has been worthy of one. Yet it is " a pity that you ſhould have exerted your " bravery in defence of this monſter, who " but for your appearance had ſoon finiſhed " his accurſed exiſtence."

Saying this they haſtened to a chariot which was waiting at the corner of the alley, and one of them mounting the box drove off the other two with expedition.

Lord Andover was now left with the perſon whom he had delivered from the hands of the aſſailants. His face, from a cut which in the conteſt had been given him acroſs the right eye, was almoſt covered with blood, and he ſeemed ſcarcely able to ſupport himſelf: his lordſhip therefore

desired to know to what place of safety he should conduct him.

"To the London Tavern, if you please," in an almost fainting voice, replied the stranger, who leaning on the arm of his deliverer, walked silently along, till arriving at the door of the hotel, the wounded man turned round and said—"Sir I thank you. "I owe you much; more I fear than I can "ever pay." He was then retiring, when his lordship stopped him, saying, "I do "not ask who it is whom I have been so "fortunate as to assist, lest I should appear "to be actuated by improper curiosity, "but if I can be of any farther service in "averting the effects of a meditated injury, "that card will tell you where your com- "mands will reach me."—Upon which, delivering him to the care of a waiter, he proceeded to his lodgings, somewhat surprised at the singularity of the adventure.

It may perhaps appear strange to the reader that three men should desist from an evidently outrageous purpose upon the intervention

intervention of Lord Andover; but it muſt be conſidered that theſe violators of the laws were not plunderers to whom all individuals were alike; that their fury was directed ſolely againſt the one then in their hands, and that finding it impracticable to execute their purpoſe, without the hazard of its being made a public affair, they avowedly poſtponed their intention and diſappeared.

The fact was that the wounded gentleman had ſeduced, and baſely deſerted a ſiſter of the other three, who were merchants of the firſt reſpectability in the City. He had then been hovering about the houſe, ſo diſguiſed that his perſon could hardly be known, waiting the appearance of a confidant who was to conduct him to the lady's apartment; when the brothers, getting information of his purpoſe, ruſhed out upon him. Being however at a little diſtance from them, he ran and would have eſcaped by turning into the before-mentioned alley, had not his foot ſlipped and

occaſioned his falling. The two eldeſt now ſeized him, while the third followed, as had been concerted, with the chariot, and was aſſiſting the others when Lord Andover appeared. Their deſign was to inſiſt upon his immediately marrying the lady, or to carry him to a place of ſecrecy and terminate his exiſtence.

Soon after this adventure our young nobleman was obliged to go over to Ireland, from whence he returned juſt before we introduced him into theſe pages by his title. Clifford and he were now almoſt inſeparable. Sometimes they reſided in town, and ſometimes at Spencer Aviary, where they always found a moſt affectionate reception, and which indeed Lord Andover ſtill conſidered as his home; his minority, under his father's will, yet wanting ſome months of completion.

Very little was the intercourſe which now ſubſiſted between the Spencers and the Percivals: however they kept up the form of relationſhip by ceremonious viſits; but not

not even Mr. Spencer's piety and philanthropy could prevent his ſhowing ſome reſentment at the proceedings of the other family. It was indeed his piety and philanthropy that were offended, as their conduct could not but be diſpleaſing both to GOD and mankind.

Part of a converſation which paſſed between Lucy Spencer and Clifford, at the laſt viſit of that gentleman to the Aviary, ſhall cloſe the chapter. A morning's ramble through ſome of the enchanting ſcenes with which the place abounded, led to the ſubjects.

Clifford. What can be more delightful than that view acroſs the terrace, through yonder beautiful glade, which ſeems to lead to groves at an immeaſurable diſtance!

Lucy. It ſurely is the loveliеſt ſpot in nature! Would my dear great grandfather could go to Heaven from this ſituation! The idea of his being obliged to leave it, and for ſuch people too! is ſometimes too

painful to me to endure with decent patience.

Clifford. It is a ſubject that I can ſcarce bear to think upon; for ſurely if there be a human being in the Univerſe who merits the love and reverence of every creature, it is that admirable man! None but thoſe intereſted in the extremeſt degree, can contemplate the change with complacency.

Lucy. Certainly not; and I am really ſo angry with Mr. R. Percival, that violent as are the invectives of my uncle Ruſſel, I take a malicious pleaſure in hearing them; eſpecially as I know that he ſo dearly loves my grandfather Spencer.

Clifford. Your aunt Martha, let me tell you, provokes me as much as anybody. What can ſhe mean by giving ſuch an undue preference to the family of the Percivals, over her own.

Lucy. It is illnatured to ſay ſo, but I know of no other reaſon than becauſe they are more like herſelf.

Clifford. Never ſiſters were more *unlike* than

than ſhe is to your mother and Miſs Abington!

Lucy. There cannot, I think be a *greater* diſſimilitude than between Mr. R. Percival and my aunt George Abington, who has oftener been ſuppoſed to be my father's ſiſter than his couſin.

Clifford. I do not wonder at it, for they bear even a perſonal reſemblance to each other. Apropos—my ſiſter has had her picture taken by Gainſborough, and when I ſaw it I was amazed at the likeneſs between that and my own.

Lucy. I am quite impatient, Mr. Clifford, to ſee Mrs. Herbert.

Clifford. Not more ſo my dear Lucy than I am that *ſhe* ſhould ſee *you.* How I anticipate the pleaſure of introducing her and my brother to this family of worthies! And my ſiſter's friend, Miſs Mansfield too —With her I know you will be particularly pleaſed.

Lucy. Ah Clifford! I ſicken at the idea of ſuch a friend as you deſcribe her to be.

Your

Your picture of her revives my beloved Harriet Montague in ſtriking colors. Such a figure; ſuch a face, and ſuch accompliſhments were her's! Deareſt—firſt friend of my heart! *Oh my Harriet!*

Clifford. Do not be angry my Lucy when I ſay that I wiſh I could, in ſome meaſure, obliterate her image both from your and Andover's remembrance.

Lucy. Had you ever ſeen her, you would have known that wiſh muſt be in vain.

Clifford. I will not however deſpair of Miſs Mansfield's fixing at leaſt the *attention* of Lord Andover, and then I ſhall hope that ſhe may, in time, ſteal upon his affection, as her mind is exactly calculated to charm him. I cannot endure that he ſhould thus waſte his days in fruitleſs regret.

Lucy. Well, I declare, ſincerely grieved as I am for him, I can hardly wiſh he ſhould ever form another attachment. Unjuſt as it doubtleſs would be, I really think I ſhould diſlike his next choice, however meritorious the

the lady might be. But has he never ſeen Miſs Mansfield?

Clifford. Never: for ſhe is ſo retired and his curioſity, in that point, is ſo orderly, that I have not yet been able to effect a meeting between them. Perhaps in time *my* ſiſter and my *ſiſter's* ſiſter may wiſh to promote an union between two ſuch accompliſhed people.

Lucy bluſhing] I will not affect to miſunderſtand you, but *that* time—

Clifford interrupting] Is not, I truſt, far diſtant: and though I feel a horror at the idea of Stephen Percival's taking poſſeſſion of this earthly paradiſe during the life of Mr. Spencer, yet as there is no probability againſt the event, I cannot help wiſhing for its arrival. If my Lucy is diſpleaſed at this confeſſion, ſhe muſt remove the cauſe of the wiſh by conſenting to fix my happineſs before that period.

The converſation now took a tender turn; but as the particulars are not any way eſſential to our ſtory, and as we are in haſte to

to return to London, we will only ſay that Mr. Clifford preſſed Lucy to conſent to be his before the removal of Mr. Spencer from the Aviary: but ſhe ſo ingenuouſly confeſſed that her ſole motive for refuſing was an unwillingneſs to darken the early days of their union by forming it juſt before ſuch an approaching cloud, that he could not but acquieſce in her feelings, and be ſilent.

CHAP.

CHAP. XCIX.

A Converſation; and a Prelude to an extraordinary Event.

THE converſation at Mr. Herbert's, between that gentleman, his lady, Mr. Clifford and Lord Andover, was particularly lively, at the time of our laſt leaving that party. Love, courtſhip, marriage and beauty were the themes. Mrs. Herbert ſaid that ſhe was very anxious to ſee her brother fixed in conjugal life, and wiſhed that he would permit her to direct his choice. Lord Andover, who was in the ſecret of his friend's concealing his attachment from his ſiſter, ſaid that he thought Frederic might ſafely be truſted in that particular, as he would anſwer for his pleaſing everybody in his ſelection of a wife, and offered to deſcribe the kind of women who

who he was ſure would be preſented to her as a ſiſter.

" If beauty, good ſenſe, ſweetneſs and " every thing amiable in woman can fix " his approbation, he cannot I think be " long wavering," ſaid Mrs. Herbert; " but " I am afraid he is inſenſible to female al- " lurements."

" No fear of that madam," returned the young earl. " Depend upon it you will " ſoon ſee him in fetters. I will bet a " hundred guineas he will be a Benedict " in leſs than another twelvemonth. But " you were mentioning an aſſemblage of " charms juſt now. Did you mean our " Britiſh females in general, or ſome par- " ticular fair more eſpecially gifted ?"

" I mean a friend of mine, who is ſupe- " rior to any thing I ever ſaw in woman," replied the lady.

" Miſs Mansfield, I preſume," ſaid Lord Andover.

Mrs. Herbert bowed.

" But

" But why madam," aſked his lordſhip, " do you keep her ſo cloſe? Are you afraid " that ſhe would be too deſtructive if ſhe " ſhould be generally known?"

" I think, indeed, her conqueſts would " be numerous," ſaid Mrs. Herbert.

" You may ſafely, however, permit me " to ſee her, for I have an idea that I " ſhould not be in danger," replied Lord Andover.

" Are you invulnerable ſir?" aſked Mr. Herbert.

" I have not always been ſo," anſwered the earl, with a ſtifled ſigh; " but I think " my danger is over."

The name of the Marquis of Hillington was now introduced; for his ſuit to Harriet and its conſequence, were known by his own confeſſion, to all his friends. Miſs Mansfield's reply to his letter had been repeated by that nobleman to Lord Andover, when Clifford was of the party; and Frederic in his preſent remarks on it obſerved, that the lady's circumſtances exactly correſponded

reſponded with his friend Andover's, and that the etiquette of a firſt prepoſſeſſion could not be inſiſted upon by either.

"Etiquette! Clifford!" repeated his lordſhip. "How can you ſpeak ſo lightly "on ſuch a ſubject.

"Pardon me, my dear Andover," returned his friend. "I do not *think* lightly "upon it; but as we have advanced thus "far, I cannot forbear to expreſs my ar- "dent wiſhes that your heart were free to "make another choice."

"Do not, Frederic expect that wiſh "will ever be accompliſhed," ſaid his lordſhip. "But upon my word, madam," turning to Mrs. Herbert, "I feel greatly "intereſted for your lovely friend, and "much wiſh to ſee her. Cannot I be fa- "vored with an interview?"

"Miſs Mansfield, I doubt will not con- "ſent to be made a ſhow of," replied Mrs. Herbert, "She has no deſire to excite "admiration."

"But when ſhe knows I am a diſap-

"pointed

" pointed man—that I never wiſh to find " anything in woman but a friend, perhaps " ſhe will not object to my requeſt," ſaid the gentleman.

" She is ſo determined a recluſe ſir," ſaid Mrs. Herbert, " that I deſpair of prevail- " ing with her to be officious in gaining " even a friend. If ever you ſee her, it " muſt be by accident."

" Lord Andover ſeems ſo convinced in " being now invulnerable," joined in Mr. Herbert, " that I could wiſh Frederic and " he would overtake you in your next " ramble with the children."

" Well ſuggeſted," ſaid Clifford. " When " will you go ſiſter ?"

" I cannot preciſely ſay," anſwered ſhe. " Miſs Mansfield has at this time ſo bad a " cold, that I am apprehenſive, that the " air would increaſe her diſorder. But I " have no objection to Mr. Herbert's " propoſal."

After the departure of the gentlemen, Mrs. Herbert repeated to Harriet as much of

of the converſation as ſhe could without paining her ſenſibility reſpecting her attachment; and ſpoke in high terms of Lord Andover. It was evident, as Mrs. Herbert remarked, that he was far from being happy, though the livelineſs of his temper muſt always render him a moſt agreeable companion. She thought him, ſhe ſaid, the moſt elegant figure ſhe had ever beheld, and indeed the moſt accompliſhed man.

Matters went on thus a conſiderable time. For ſeveral days, Miſs Montague's cold continued to be troubleſome, and when it was in ſome degree removed, a ſeries of bad weather prevented the ladies from enjoying their accuſtomed airings. The Marquis of Hillington perſevered in his viſits to Mr. Herbert's, where he often formed a party with Clifford and Lord Andover. Theſe viſits, joined with Harriet's preſent dejection of ſpirits, rendered it difficult for Mrs. Herbert to perſuade her friend to ſpend any time out of the apartments

ments appropriated to the children, whoſe innocent prattle, fondneſs, and rapid improvement in all that ſhe endeavored to teach them, intereſted Harriet more than the converſation of any other company. Her Seymour and ſhe were often within a few minutes of meeting, and ſtill oftener within a few yards diſtance of each other. So cautious was ſhe of being ſeen by either the Marquis, or by Mr. Percival, whom ſhe thought buſineſs might again lead to Mr. Herbert's, that upon a rap at the door, if by chance ſhe was below ſtairs, ſhe would inſtantly retire through a paſſage which led to a back ſtaircaſe: and ſhe has ſeveral times left the room juſt as Lord Andover entered it. This ſome of the Mrs. Quaintlys of the age will pronounce to be an evident indication of the oppoſition of Providence to the union of our accompliſhed lovers.

An accident now happened to Lord Andover which for more than a fortnight prevented his appearance in Pall Mall. Going one morning to ride with Clifford to Barnet,

Barnet, his horſe took fright juſt as he was going to mount him, and ſuddenly turning round, ſtruck his maſter's leg with one of his hind feet and wounded it very deeply from the calf to the ankle. Clifford immediately alighted and aſſiſted his friend into the houſe, ſent for a ſurgeon, who, without making the worſt of the caſe, told him that he ought to be very well ſatisfied if he found himſelf able to walk at the end of a fortnight. During the young gentleman's confinement, Mr. Clifford was his almoſt conſtant attendant, dividing his time between his lodgings and Pall Mall, where, being unaccompanied, he again enjoyed the privilege of Mrs. Herbert's brother, and without ceremony, went immediately to the apartments of the nurſery. Here he had free converſations with Miſs Montague, who ſo continually improved upon him that his affection for her was nothing ſhort of that which he entertained for his ſiſter; Miſs Spencer alone, holding a ſuperior place in his heart. When he was with

Lord

Lord Andover, his diſcourſe turned frequently upon her excellencies, and in time he ſo far ſucceeded in heightening the curioſity of his friend to ſee this female wonder, as he termed her, that they agreed, as ſoon as his lordſhip ſhould be able to walk, to meet the ladies in one of their excurſions. But now fortune promiſed to facilitate a meeting between this inimitable pair, in a ſtill more advantageous manner than that projected by the gentlemen.

Several children in Mr. Herbert's neighbourhood were, at this time, afflicted with the meaſles, which ſo much alarmed both him and his lady, that they determined to remove their family to Windſor, and accordingly took lodgings in that place. However, their removal did not anſwer the purpoſed deſign. They hoped by haſtening from London, to ſecure their little ones from the contagious diſorder, but they carried the infection with them, and in leſs than two days the meaſles were apparent. Owing to the freſhneſs of the air, their re-

covery was ſpeedy, and they might with ſafety have returned, but as the ſituation was pleaſant and healthy, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert determined to ſtay there a week or fortnight longer. Twice during their reſidence at Windſor, Mr. Clifford had been their viſiter, and it was fixed that he and Lord Andover, now recovered from his hurt, ſhould ſpend a day or two with them before their return to town.

And now my dear female friends are you prepared for this great event? Do you anticipate the meeting between two of the moſt faithful hearts on the habitable globe —hearts, which though they deſpaired of ever meeting, beat but for each other? Do you in idea behold their aſtoniſhment, which for a time rendered them ſpeechleſs, and amazed their ſurrounding friends? Do you contemplate the joy which after a painful eclairceſſement took poſſeſſion of their ſouls, and rendered them the moſt bleſt of humankind?

Alas! the proſpect is illuſive—the idea chimerical!

chimerical! for on the day before that fixed upon for the Windsor excursion, Lord Andover received a letter which severed him hundreds of miles from his lovely and beloved Harriet; which sent him at once from this happy Island, to brave the inclemency of Neptune's Empire!!

CHAP. C.

A laſt Farewell to Miſs Harriet Montague! to the Conſequence of whoſe Death we muſt now attend.

AS the letter which is ſoon to reach the hands of our favorite young nobleman, is of too much conſequence to be inſerted at the latter end of a chapter, we ſhall make it the beginning of a new one, and we now ſummon the attention of our friends to its contents.

" To Lord Andover.

Pelham Street, No. 36.

" Sir,

" The aſſiſtance you one night afforded " to a wounded man, whom you after- " wards conducted to the London tavern, " is too recent a circumſtance to have " eſcaped your memory, though perhaps " the

" the length of time which has elapſed
" ſince the event, has given you to believe
" that you ſhould never hear any thing
" more of the perſon for whom you exer-
" ciſed your humanity, nor indeed would
" you, but for a coincidence of circum-
" ſtances which irreſiſtibly impels me to ad-
" dreſs you.

" I am now confined to my chamber,
" and am told by my phyſicians and ſur-
" geons, that there is not much probability
" of my ever leaving it. How this intel-
" ligence affects me, I will not ſay. My
" heart is naturally ſanguine, and I en-
" courage its flattery when it tells me theſe
" doctors are miſtaken. It ill becomes a
" ſoldier to yield to either quackery or
" prieſt-craft.

" After you had ſaved me from the ruf-
" fians which had pre-determined my ex-
" tirpation from this land of exiſtence, I
" again braved my fate, by going diſ-
" guiſed as before (which diſguiſe alone
" prevented your recognition of a man

" whom it is not likely you ever can for-
" get) within their precincts, at a time
" when I was treacherously informed that
" they were absent from the metropolis.
" The consequence was, that I was wound-
" ed in several parts of my body, though I
" had taken a friend with me to prevent
" danger. A mortal stab, as these impo-
" tent medical wretches, though of the first
" fame in the kingdom, inform me, was
" given me in the thigh; so high up, that
" the amputation they want to persuade
" me to submit to, would not, I well know
" be of avail to save my life, could I be
" such a dastard as to accept it upon such
" terms. What! live without a leg!
" Live to be pointed at for a cripple! No;
" I would sooner die, and go—I know
" not where.

" But this is not to my purpose.

" My name—the name of MILLEMONT!
" —must, I well know, be hateful to your
" senses. On that account, I shall only
" sign the initials, that you may read with-
" out

" out diſcompoſure what precedes its in-
" troduction.

" I told you I was your debtor. A debtor
" indeed! for I have robbed you of more
" than the world can balance—of a wo-
" man whoſe worth is beyond eſtimate!

" You ſuppoſed—Oh how fallaciouſly!
" —that her flight with me was a voluntary
" one. Inſtead of that, ſhe was torn, vio-
" lently torn from every thing her ſoul
" held valuable. The ſtrongeſt compul-
" ſion was uſed to carry her from Beverly
" —from England. At firſt, I ſuppoſed
" Mrs. Mitchel to be the only abettor of
" my deſign, but at the inſtant of my tak-
" ing her away, I was convinced of what
" was afterwards corroborated by more
" ſubſtantial evidence, that the family in
" general of the Percivals aſſiſted my
" wiſhes. Several of them were abſolutely
" active in the buſineſs, and decoyed her to
" take the evening walk which put her into
" the power of myſelf and ſervants. The
" letters you received from her during her

" confinement by old Mrs. Percival's edict
" in her chamber, as anſwers to yours
" which never reached her hands, were all
" obtained by force or ſtratagem. This
" Mrs. Mitchel boaſted of to me to enhance
" the value of her aſſiſtance. Her dancing
" with me at Mr. Wharton's ball, by poſi-
" tive command of the before-mentioned
" old vile woman, was the preclude to her
" ſubſequent diſtreſs—diſtreſs which I now
" think upon with hatred, malice, and re-
" venge to the greatly more atrocious au-
" thors than myſelf. For what did *I* do,
" but what was conſiſtent with a character
" which I never attempted to diſguiſe!
" Whereas *they* violated every law that
" ought to bind human nature, and I feel
" no heſitation in ſaying, that the Percivals
" are the moſt helliſh conſpirators which
" ever diſgraced ſociety. Farther proof of
" this, you ſhall have when I ſee you, for I
" am in haſte to get to the more material
" part of my relation.

" Knowing the lady as you know her,

" it

" it muſt be needleſs for me to ſay how
" much I doated upon her, and how great-
" ly I wiſhed for ſome part of that affection
" which was ſo immoveably yours! To
" break, if poſſible, her attachment to you,
" I bribed the proprietor of a newſpaper to
" inſert your marriage with Miſs Spencer;
" this I muſt obſerve drove her almoſt to
" madneſs, as the paragraph intimated
" your belief of her guilt, in a voluntary
" flight, and this opinion, I dare ſay,
" wherever ſhe may be, ſhe retains.

" You ſee, Lord Andover, my perfect
" candour, I wiſh you to have every thing
" before you. I wiſh to give every poſſi-
" ble incitement to diſcover the lovely
" woman; both becauſe the injury ſhe has
" ſuſtained lies nearer to my heart than
" any affair in which I ever was concern-
" ed, and becauſe of the vengeance which
" with pleaſure I contemplate will, in con-
" ſequence, be levelled at the wretches at
" Beverly Lodge.

" After a ſhort continuance in London,

" I carried the captive beauty, then, by " force of medicine in a deep ſleep, on " board a veſſel which immediately ſailed " for the Weſt Indies ; and we were ſafely " conveyed to my eſtate near Jamaica. " During our reſidence in that place, I " made uſe of every effort to induce the " charming mourner to comply with my " propoſals of love and marriage, but ſhe " rejected them all with firmneſs upon the " ſame motive that ſhe would have refuſed " the greateſt emperor under Heaven—her " inviolable affection for you, though at " that time ſhe ſuppoſed you to be loſt to " her for ever. I will ſay I never before " beheld ſuch an invincible attachment.

" Soft meaſures being unavailing, I pro- " ceeded to harſh ones ; but neither threats " nor promiſes procured me any advan- " tage, and after an abode at Citron Grove " (the name of my eſtate in the before- " mentioned iſland) ſhe eluded the watch- " fulneſs of myſelf and her attendants, and " *with a perſon as ſpotleſs as her mind,* diſ-

" appeared

" appeared at once ; ſince which period, I " have never been able, with the moſt " diligent inquiries of myſelf and connex- " ions, to diſcover the leaſt traces of her " exiſtence : yet that ſhe ſtill lives, I am " firmly perſuaded, as the death of ſo fine " a creature could not have happened " without ſome public intimation of it, and " this it was not poſſible that I ſhould have " miſſed, as I examined every thing the " preſs produced in the vicinity, till I left " the Iſland.

" After you had rendered me the ſervice, " with the mention of which I began this " letter, I determined upon giving you the " above intelligence, but from time to time " I poſtponed my deſign. Since that pe- " riod, I have, as I before-mentioned been " ſeverely wounded, and during my con- " finement, have been nurſed by an honeſt " ſailor, who ſaved me from going over- " board on my return to England, for " which reaſon I feel myſelf attached to " him, and happy in his attendance. This

" fellow was married, before his laſt voyage
" to the Weſt, to young woman at Chel-
" ſea; and from him, or by his means, I
" have indubitable proofs—proofs which
" the laws of England muſt admit, and
" which conſequently muſt confirm her
" right—that the loveliеſt woman in the
" creation, whoſe affection is yours, and
" whom you have ſo long known by the
" name of Harriet Montague, is no other
" than the eldeſt daughter of Mr. and Mrs.
" Spencer of the Shrubbery, and THE IN-
" CONTESTIBLE HEIRESS OF SPENCER
" AVIARY, WITH ALL ITS DOMAINS.

" It gives me moſt ſincere ſatisfaction to
" be the author of this diſcovery, as I
" I truſt that it will be deemed SOME
" RETRIBUTION. The moment the cir-
" cumſtance came to my knowledge, all
" objections to enter upon the ſubject va-
" niſhed in an inſtant, and I immediately
" ſet about writing, becauſe I can much
" more eaſily do that, than talk, though I
" can only do the *firſt* at intervals; but

" talking

" talking, if for only five minutes at a
" time, brings on the hated fainting fits
" which have troubled me for the laſt ten
" days.

" The name of your HARRIET, is LE-
" TITIA. She was, while at nurſe with
" the mother of my ſailor's wife, exchang-
" ed for the dead child of Mrs. Montague,
" who was daughter to old Mrs. Percival.
" The reſt you ſhall be told verbally, for I
" find myſelf growing weaker.

" I need not require your preſence as
" ſoon as poſſible, nor your forbearance of
" reproaches: for well I know your na-
" ture.

" Bring with you a friend or two as wit-
" neſſes, and a magiſtrate to adminiſter an
" oath.

" I am Sir, more than I can expreſs,
" Your ardent well-wiſher,
" G. R. M."

No tongue, no pen, nor ſcarcely any imagination, can portray the effect which the

the above letter had upon Lord Andover. He read it, and laid it down. He needed not to read it any more, for every line, every word was written upon his heart in indelible characters. The diſtreſs of our heroine and her tenderneſs for him, alternately impreſſed his ſoul. His uncertainty of her reſidence, of even her *exiſtence*, tortured his mind more than any mortal invention could poſſibly have tortured his body. For ſome length of time he ſcarce gave one thought to the circumſtance of her being Mr. Spencer's daughter; but when he turned to that idea, his mind, which was quick, ſtrong, and capacious, ſaw at once into the train of incidents that had marked her life. He had heard of the death of the little Letitia, and had, *with this Letitia herſelf*, and her ſiſter Lucy, often lamented it. He had heard it mentioned by the Percivals in ſarcaſtic terms, and as a proof that the eſtate was deſtined for their family. The obvious hatred of the pretended grandmother—the diſregard

of

of the ſuppoſed uncle and aunt, with the conſequent conduct of the couſins, now appeared to be perfectly accounted for. Several recollections convinced him that Stephen was acquainted with the atrocious proceedings of his parents; and induced him alſo to ſuppoſe that Mrs. Mitchel, Robert, and Barbara had been let into the ſecret; but in this he was miſtaken. Stephen alone, whoſe more immediate intereſt, as it was juſtly believed, would keep him faithful, had been admitted into the ſanctuary; and not even in him would they have confided had it not been for the purpoſe of obliging him to ſign ſome writings, neceſſary to ſecure to his mother during her life her darling object of the Aviary, and a certain part of the ſurrounding eſtate. Theſe writings, as it was agreed, were to be reſigned on the morning after Stephen's coming of age, and previous to his intended entry into the great manſion: but with this engagement, at times, he was almoſt determined not to comply, as he truly conjectured

jectured that his mother would not dare, under any circumstances of provocation, to discover the villainy which had been transacted respecting the legal heiress.

Fired with indignation—stimulated by the love of justice, actuated by the most sincere and ardent affection which ever glowed in the breast of man, and which compassion for the unmerited sufferings of the object of his almost adoration, and the dread of never more beholding her, had now increased to a degree nearly beyond endurance, Lord Andover sat fixed in his chair. At length starting from a reverie, in which he had almost unconsciously formed his plans, he darted into action; being determined to pursue, with unceasing activity, every method human reason could suggest of recovering his beloved Letitia Spencer, *now no more Harriet Montague.*

CHAP.

CHAP. CI.

The Letter communicated.

LORD Andover haſtily ſummoning a ſervant, ordered a coach, into which he inſtantly entered and deſired the driver to convey him as faſt as poſſible to Mr. Clifford's lodgings: here he was informed that his friend was gone with the biſhop of Chicheſter to the houſe of the lord chancellor, to whom, as the reader has been told, the prelate was related. This was a circumſtance favorable to the plan which his lordſhip had formed, and he followed the gentlemen to the great lawyer's, where he was no ſtranger.

Scarce had the uſual ſalutations paſſed before the impatient Henry advanced to his friend and ſaid, "Read that letter to "theſe gentlemen while I retire, and ſum- "mon me as ſoon as you have ended." In ſaying

ſaying which, he bowed; left the apartment, and went into the ſaloon, which he traverſed with haſty ſteps.

Mr. Clifford was alarmed by the appearance of Lord Andover's unuſual diſcompoſure; for ſo expreſſive was his countenance, that it almoſt portrayed the agitation of his mind, which no words could have deſcribed. When he was departed, Clifford read the letter, but ſo great was even *his* emotion, that he could proceed but with difficulty. His friend—his Lucy—the Spencers—the lovely ſufferer—divided his ſoul by turns. At length he explained ſome parts of the letter to the gentlemen and then went to ſeek Seymour, as he was ſtill often termed by his intimates.

When the friends met, they could neither of them utter a ſyllable for ſome moments, but catching at each other's hand, both of them heaved a profound ſigh, and expreſſed their ſentiments by their eyes.

In a few minutes they returned to the library, where they found the chancellor and

and the biſhop buſy in arranging the proper method of procedure; and the firſt part of their plan was to call upon a neighbouring magiſtrate and with him to go directly to the lodgings of Captain Millemont. This was accordingly purſued, and upon their arrival, they were uſhered into the apartment of the ſick man, whom Lord Andover inſtantly approached, and taking him by the hand, ſaid in a low but fervent voice, "GOD forgive you ſir, as I do; "and bleſs you."

By ſome of our readers, Lord Andover's lenity may be deemed extreme; but it muſt be remembered, that as he did not know ſo much of Millemont's baſeneſs to Letitia as we have unfolded: his chief anger reſted on the Percivals. To Millemont he owed the preſent great diſcovery, for which, whatever might be the motive of its being made, all thoſe whom he moſt loved in the world, were highly indebted. Beſides, the circumſtance of his being a ſick—nay probably a dying man—would have rendered a contrary

a contrary conduct unchriſtian and inhuman.

Millemont was deeply affected by the warmth of the noble Henry's expreſſion. Seizing his hand he claſped it between his own, and while tears ſtarted into his eyes he ſaid, in a faint but ardent tone, "An-" dover, this is too much. I do not de-" ſerve it from you!"

The reſt of the company now advancing, the buſineſs of the viſit was immediately opened: when Millemont, too weak to talk much, referred to his letter, and inſiſted upon being permitted to take an oath to his belief of every ſyllable of its communication, leſt his death ſhould happen before any adjuſtment could take place. His oath then, to ſatisfy him, was taken, though it was not deemed material, and then the ſailor being introduced, his depoſition alſo upon oath was noted down to the following effect.

That about three years back, he married Hannah, the daughter of a woman called Mary

Mary Watkins, who, he had been told by his wife, had once lived at Hilton, near the Village of Beverly; that after his marriage he learned from ſeveral converſations, that there was ſome myſtery relating to a nurſe-child who was formerly under the care of his mother-in-law, about which ſhe frequently ſeemed to be very uneaſy, and that in the courſe of time, his inquiries by degrees and in pieces procured the following information:—That the lady of Mr. Edward Spencer, at Beverly Shrubbery, had a daughter, named Letitia, who was ſent to her houſe to be nurſed for ſome illneſs, which required a change of air; that the child mended very faſt and was at length quite recovered, when ſome ladies from a place called the Lodge, went and *tampered* with the nurſe, and by fine words and money prevailed on her to give the child ſomething to make it ill, and then to ſend to the parents to tell them that it had relapſed; that on this being done, the child was one night taken away and a dead one

of

of about the ſame age, carried down in a coach drawn by *ſix ſmoking horſes* from London and put in the place of her nurſling: that afterwards the man who was then her huſband, and whoſe real name (as the ſailor's wife had told him) was Taylor, went for Mr. and Mrs. Spencer under the pretence of bringing them, if poſſible, to ſee their child before it died; that the living child was carried to Hampſtead, but afterwards removed to Chelſea, to nurſe Ellenſon, who it had been ſince reported at Beverly was dead, but who was, by means of Mr. Percival's perſuaſion and a large gift of money, married to Sam Watkins, alias Taylor, who had neceſſarily been made acquainted with the exchange of the children.

Webſter, which was the name of the ſailor, then ſaid that he underſtood that the family at the Lodge were for a great while very kind and liberal to Watkins and his wife, but that of late, upon ſome application from theſe for money, the Percivals had

had changed their conduct and treated their poor instruments with great severity, threatening to expose their former behaviour, which, as it was now affirmed, could hurt nobody but themselves, as she [Mary Watkins] was the only person *who had betrayed her trust*, and as the husband could not be an evidence on behalf of his wife, nor she on behalf of her husband: that the young woman whom they had known by the name of Harriet Montague was dead and buried, and that therefore nothing now stood in the way of the next heir, who had *always* the most *just*, if not the most *legal* title to the estate. This language, according to Webster, had so effectually frightened the persons to whom it was addressed, that they did not dare to execute any purposes of revenge, however well inclined they might be to entertain them.

Captain Millemont here interrupted the proceeding by explaining the reason of this alteration in the conduct of the Percivals; they were now, he said, in their own opinions,

nions, quite ſecure of ſucceſs in all their meditated meaſures, as he had himſelf, to elude any farther inquiry, informed Mrs. Lumley of the death of Miſs Montague, ſoon after his marriage with her in Jamaica. This tale he knew to have been tranſmitted to Mrs. Mitchel and hence aroſe the triumph of the Percivals.

Without any comments on Millemont's falſe aſſertions, we will proceed with the narrative of Webſter. He ſaid that his mother-in-law was *mortally* grieved when ſhe heard of the young lady's death, and was fearful of ſome foul play on the occaſion: that ſhe wiſhed moſt earneſtly to have ſeen her before ſhe died; and that though it was long ſince ſhe had been admitted to her preſence, ſhe ſhould have known the child whom ſhe had nurſed amongſt ten thouſand. All this, Webſter ſaid had been told to him by his wife, who on the evening before, had given him a box of letters, ſent at different times either to her

her mother or father-in-law from ſome of Mr. Percival's family.

Theſe letters were now produced, and though they appeared to have been written with caution, they corroborated in the ſtrongeſt manner, the ſailor's depoſition. With the key now given, every thing in them ſtood at once diſcloſed. In an early one of old Mrs. Percival's to the woman, the reaſons for her deſign of taking the child to Beverly Lodge, were given at large. She ſaid in the firſt place that the expenſe would be leſs, and the apprehenſion of diſcovery leſs likewiſe; as the very bravery of the determination would of itſelf be ſufficient to prevent ſuſpicion, for how unlikely that the child ſhould be maintained and educated in a ſituation immediately expoſed to the eyes of its own parents. In the next place the old lady affirmed that ſhe never could be eaſy if the child were to be at all removed from her own particular obſervation; and thirdly ſhe obſerved that ſhe was more apprehenſive of Peggy Moſely, her

daughter's old ſervant, than of anybody elſe; as this woman would not believe that her miſtreſs's daughter was living, and might poſſibly viſit Chelſea for the purpoſe of examining the child, and might thus, notwithſtanding the oppoſition of the nurſe, make a diſcovery of the exchange. Theſe were Mrs. Percival's oſtenſible reaſons for removing the poor little orphan, as it was generally called, from Chelſea to Beverly, and they had all of them their due influence in the forming of a reſolution, which appeared to be leſs hazardous on reflection than it did to the firſt view. But the ſtrongeſt inducement with this ſubtle dame for the removal of the infant from Mrs. Watkins, as ſhe was called, remained ſtill to be told. That woman, whoſe ſtifled conſcience was not abſolutely dead, had vowed never to part with her little charge, unleſs it were to the immediate hands of Mrs. Percival herſelf; and this lady was ſo apprehenſive that the ſingular beauty and ſweetneſs of the child would gain upon the nurſe,

nurſe, and in time lead her to diſcloſe the circumſtances of her birth, that ſhe juſtly thought that any removal would be preferable, with reſpect to the ſafety of her plan, to the continuance of the infant at Chelſea. Truſting therefore to the change, effected by the intervention of years in the girl's appearance, which indeed was ſuch that a recognition of her was ſcarcely poſſible, Mrs. Percival formed the ſingular deſign of carrying her at once to the Lodge. And the event juſtified her conduct: for the ſecret which would probably have been developed much ſooner in any other ſituation, was not at laſt betrayed in conſequence of the child's reſidence at Beverly.

Another letter appeared in this collection, which informed Mrs. Watkins of the ſucceſs of their meaſures, and aſſured her of the child's welfare; adding, what all the letters ſuggeſted, and what indeed was the firſt plea uſed to induce the woman's concurrence with their deſigns, that juſtice would now take place, as it was a miſtake

only of the lawyer who made Mr. Charlton's will, which gave Letitia a title before Stephen; it having been the teſtator's intent that the firſt *ſon*, and not a *daughter*, ſhould inherit the eſtate.

One letter was written upon the young lady's apparent elopement with Captain Millemont; one, upon her ſuppoſed marriage with him, and a very triumphant one, of which Webſter had before given ſome account, upon the intelligence of her death. This laſt, lately written, ſhewed that they now braved the opinion of the whole world; as they declared in it that it was not of much conſequence to themſelves whether the tranſaction was, or was not, any longer a ſecret, ſince nothing could bring the dead to life, or affect Stephen's poſſeſſion of what was now his lawful, as well as his juſt inheritance; but that the diſcloſure of the fraud would be the certain ruin of Mrs. Watkins and her huſband.

This letter was one of the moſt artful that ever was penned: it was begun by the elder,

elder, and finiſhed by the younger Mrs. Percival. Its object was to free their family from that kind of ſubjection which they had been held in by the poor people of Chelſea; and for this purpoſe the writers employed arguments calculated to enforce the ſilence of their accomplices by connecting it with an idea of their own ſafety.

The promiſes which they had given of large rewards to the man and his wife upon Stephen's entrance into Spencer Aviary, were in this letter treated lightly; and in their room threatnings were ſubſtituted: a tone, in ſhort, of ſeverity prevailed generally through the compoſition. This had enraged, at the ſame time that it had inſpired the Watkins's with terror; and their great diſtreſs and agitation on this occaſion, gave Webſter more light into the affair than he had ever had before: for as he was not a conſtant reſident in their houſe, though his wife was, they did not confide in him with that perfect unreſerve

which, as a conſtant inmate, he might probably have obtained.

The ſentiments which a haſty peruſal of theſe letters, and ſeveral others on the ſame ſubjects, excited in the minds of the auditors, may eaſily be ſuppoſed. Every noble paſſion was rouſed; every virtue in arms, to redreſs the grievances of the injured and to puniſh the guilty.

After the general reſentment had ſō far ſubſided as to admit of a diſcuſſion reſpecting the proper method of proceeding, the great Lord Chancellor of the time, whoſe fervency in the cauſe of juſtice has been celebrated by an abler pen, propoſed an immediate viſit to Chelſea. This was unanimouſly agreed to, and the Chancellor, the Biſhop, the Magiſtrate and Mr. Clifford, went in one coach, while in another followed Lord Andover, the Sailor and the Juſtice's clerk, a very ſhrewd young man, and a remarkable ſwift writer of ſhort-hand.

When the carriages ſtopt at Watkins' door, the people within were in the greateſt conſternation,

conſternation, expecting the officers of juſtice to carry them to Newgate; and upon Webſter's appearance, the nurſe cried out, "A laws! James! what han ye doon? "Han ye betrayed us!"

"By meſs, only for your own good, "mother," returned James; "ſo donna "be afeared. No harm ſhall come to you, "an you will but tell truth."

The formidable party now entered the houſe of Sam Watkins, who, with his wife was ſoon prevailed upon, by hope and by fear, to give a ſuccinct account of the whole black tranſaction upon oath, which was taken down by the clerk, in due form. This account exactly tallied with that before given by Webſter, with the addition of ſeveral particulars which ſet the affair in ſo clear a light, that to hear, and to be convinced, were the ſame thing. Mr. Percival, his wife and mother, were equally involved in the diabolical buſineſs; though the plan was firſt ſuggeſted by the dowager

upon receiving a letter from her dying daughter. If the reader will give himself the trouble to re-peruſe the ſhort dialogue that paſſed between her and her ſon, in the 18th chapter of our firſt volume, they will ſee the inſtant in which the idea had its origin. The objection which the gentleman expreſſed to his mother's attendance upon his ſiſter, was ſoon removed, when, upon Miſs Martha Abington's retiring for the night, the old lady made known the project, which in leſs than the ſpace of a minute was formed and completely arranged in her Machiavelian brain; he heſitated however and ſpoke his doubts—doubts calculated to urge the deed, while ſuch a ſmile as Milton gave to his hero, evinced his approbation.—His precious partner!—his true help-mate—quick as electric fire caught the idea, and it was with reluctance ſhe retired to her pillow, after having ſat till almoſt day-light, arranging the intended proceedings.

" — Nor

" — Nor aught of reſt ſhe knew: her buſy thought
Refuſed the aid of ſleep, her mind to calm;
And doubts, and hopes, and fears prevailed by turns
To agonize her ſoul."

Early in the morning the dowager ſet out for the avowed purpoſe of giving her bleſſing to the departing Mrs. Montague. Her ſon attended her, and his lady went with them as far as Hilton to aſſiſt in diſpoſing nurſe Ellenſon, with the pliancy of whoſe principles they were acquainted, to favor their plan. By means of the golden arguments generally uſed upon ſuch occaſions, they ſoon ſucceeded: Samuel Taylor, alias Watkins, who had been employed by Mr. Percival in buſineſs relative to his Lincolnſhire eſtate, was convened, and by the managing gentleman formally ſworn to act with ſecrecy, and in concert with the nurſe in all ſhe ſhould direct. The buſineſs being thus ſettled, the old lady purſued her journey to London, where ſhe ſoon had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing her daughter die, and in a ſhort time after, the little orphan alſo.

On this, being preceded by two ſpecial meſſengers, one to the Lodge, the other to Hilton, ſhe inſtantly ſet off with the corpſe of her grandchild for the houſe of Mrs. Ellenſon, where ſhe arrived about eleven at night, and exchanging the dead for the living infant, returned with all poſſible expedition. The buſineſs was afterwards conducted as has been related in the ſixteenth chapter of the firſt volume of this our hiſtory.

In proceſs of time, Mr. Percival judged it expedient that Taylor ſhould marry Mrs. Ellenſon, as the ſecret would thereby reſt in one family. For this purpoſe he gave them an additional ſum of money; fixed them in an unfrequented part of Chelſea, and recommended it to them to take the name of Watkins.

After this full diſcloſure of the iniquitous tranſaction, the huſband produced ſome papers which he ſaid that he had always conſidered as of conſequence. When they were opened, their importance was acknowledged by

by the gentlemen preſent, for they alone would have eſtabliſhed the point in queſtion before any judicature in the three kingdoms. They were indeed the contents of a pocket book which old Mrs. Percival had dropped as ſhe was ſtepping into the carriage with the living infant juſt exchanged for the dead body of the real Harriet Montague. The book was picked up by Taylor the moment the old Lady was driven off; and though many inquiries were very ſoon made about it, he never would acknowledge his finding of it, as a certain little piece of paper of ten pounds value, the uſe of which he perfectly underſtood, was diſcovered by him in one of its pockets. The loſs of this book occaſioned the good gentlewoman many anxious hours, as there were ſeveral letters in it from her ſon and daughter-in-law, which ſhe had received during her attendance upon her dying child. But ſhe endeavoured to perſuade herſelf that ſhe had dropped it on getting into the carriage in London, and that it had

either been trodden to pieces; or on account of the bill, had been burnt with the other papers by the finder. One of the letters, written by Mrs. R. Percival, and ſigned with her name at full length, was expreſſive of every vice attributable to human nature. It was in reply to the intelligence of Mrs. Montague's deceaſe, and the probably approaching end of the poor orphan. The writer hinted that it would be uncharitable to endeavor to prolong the life of a little wretch who was born in a ſtate of beggary, and that *to let it take its chance*, was care of it ſufficient. The reſt of the packet was little leſs opprobious to its authors, and ſtrongly corroborated the verbal accounts which we have given.

The nurſe was now aſked whether ſhe ſhould know her young charge if ſhe were to ſee her again.

She ſaid, yes, amidſt ten thouſand, though it was a conſiderable time ſince ſhe had had that happineſs, as old Mrs. Percival, from whom the young lady was never ſuffered to

to be abſent, had not been much in London for ſome years, till the winter before laſt, when ſhe had told her all about Miſs's running away with a ſoldier, and had much grieved her with the tidings. The nurſe added that Mr. Stephen was at that time with his grandmother, and was certainly acquainted with the exchange of the children, as he took great pains to convince her that he had always been the *rightful* heir to the eſtate.

The Chancellor now propoſed the removal of Watkins's family to private lodgings in London, and after receiving aſſurances of ſafety and protection, they complied with the propoſal; reſuming their real name of Taylor ſtill farther to elude any ſearch which might hereafter be made for them by the Percivals. The gentlemen now returned to Captain Millemont; acquainted him with what had been done, and requeſted him to copy a letter dictated by the Chancellor to Mr. Percival, retracting the former intimations which had been given

given reſpecting the lovely Letitia; and atteſting, with the ſacred word of a dying man, a full belief of her exiſtence; unſullied purity, and perfect innocence.

With this Millemont inſtantly complied, and the letter was conſigned to the hands of Lord Andover, to be ſent, when occaſion ſhould require, to the people at the Lodge.

The next ſtep was to order Taylor to write a letter to Mr. Percival, which the clerk of the juſtice, accompanied by Webſter, was to deliver to that gentleman, and take from him his anſwer. The letter was as follows:

"SIR AND LADIES,

"I am, at this time, in much want of "the ſum of fourteen pounds, and as Mr. "Stephen Percival is about to be put into "poſſeſſion of the great Aviary eſtate by "means of my wife's helping you to change "the lawful heireſs, Miſs Letitia Spencer, "for the dead body of Miſs Harriet Mon-

"tague,

" tague, and thereby cheating, as it were,
" the family of their lawful right, I hope
" you will be ſo kind as not to refuſe me
" as now, when I am in ſore want of the
" money, and which I hereby do ſay ſhall
" be the laſt I ſhall aſk you for, as ſeeing
" that Miſs Letitia is now, as you ſent us
" word, dead in good earneſt, and as Mr.
" Stephen will ſoon be poſſeſſed of all the
" place, after which to be ſure I cannot
" require any more, becauſe the matter
" will be all over. My wife's ſon in law,
" who married our Hannah, will take this
" to you, but you need not ſay any thing
" to him about the matter, as we dont
" want to tell every body every thing, as
" ſeeing how that mighn't be quite ſo well,
" becauſe we might get ourſelves into a
" meſs, as we are poor people, ſo be pleaſed
" to write me word if Miſs Letitia be dead
" indeed, and if afterwards I may not as
" well be Sam Taylor again, as I don't
" like to go by another name no longer.

" I am

" I am however for the preſent, ſir and " ladies,

" Your dutiful Servant,

" SAM. WATKINS."

This letter was copied and duly witneſſed, after which the clerk and Webſter went expreſs to the Lodge, leaving their horſes about a mile ſhort of their journey's end, to prevent a ſuſpicion of the importance of their errand. When the letter was put into the hands of Mr. Percival, he coloured; frowned, and appeared confuſed; he then went with it to his mother's apartment where he found her, and his wife in earneſt converſation on the expected great change in their family affairs. On communicating what he had received, the ladies were conſiderably diſcompoſed, but agreed that the requeſt muſt be complied with, and even exceeded, by ſome unaſked preſents to the wife. No fear, however, was to be viſible; on the contrary, the reply was to be haughty,

haughty, and the people taught to know that the Percivals did not now ſtand in need of their aſſiſtance: the gentleman therefore wrote the following:

" SAMUEL,

" The contents of your letter, at this " juncture are rather extraordinary; ne- " verthelefs, on the account of paſt ſervices " I grant your requeſt; the more readily " as I can bring your own hand-writing to " witneſs your declaring this ſhall be the " laſt time of your troubling me on the ſame " account. I therefore encloſe you a bill " for twenty pounds, deſiring you to pre- " ſent your wife with the ſurplus, as a joint " gift from the two Mrs. Percivals.

" The young woman about whom you " ſo very particularly inquire, is moſt aſ- " ſuredly dead and buried: and therefore " it is, that we inform you we ſhall not " any more want the aſſiſtance of either " nurſe or yourſelf.

" With

" With reſpect to your name—why will " not that which you at preſent bear ſerve " you as well as the other? You have not " my conſent to change it: ſo take care " what you do in that matter. Let me ſee " that you are willing to oblige me now as " well as formerly, and you ſhall, on occa- " ſion, find that I am

" Still your friend,

" RICHARD PERCIVAL."

This letter, atteſted by the clerk and Webſter, to have been received immediately from the hand of the gentleman, whoſe ſignature it bears, was depoſited in the hands of the Chancellor, to be produced with the other important papers, in caſe the delinquents ſhould have ſufficient *hardieſſe* to ſtand a trial. This however it could ſcarcely be ſuppoſed that they would do, after having been previouſly confronted by the various uncontrovertible proofs which were now collected.

As

As ſoon as theſe neceſſary ſteps had been taken, Lord Andover and Clifford again viſited Captain Millemont and received from him farther particulars reſpecting his ſeizure of Letitia. Having ſecured a paſſage in a ſhip which was ſoon to ſail from the Lizard Point for Jamaica, they then prepared to ſet off poſt for Spencer Aviary, the Earl having with difficulty been prevailed upon to delay the journey till the return of the meſſengers from the Lodge, leſt the report of any emotion in the family of the Spencers might alarm the conſcious Percivals. Juſt after the laſt departure of the two friends from Beverly to London, Millemont's fabricated tale of the lovely Letitia's marriage and death, had been induſtriouſly ſpread through the neighbourhood by Mrs. Mitchel; and had been deeply deplored by her friends at the Aviary and in the village. Lucy was inconſolable, as ſhe had always cheriſhed a hope that the fame of her favorite would one day be cleared, and that ſhe herſelf would be reſtored to her affection.

When

When the account reached Mr. Ruffel, he profeſſed his diſbelief of both circumſtances; deemed the whole to be ſome vile artifice, in which he ſuſpected the Percivals to be concerned, that they might inherit the pittance of which Mrs. Montague had died poſſeſſed.

Mr. Barker ſaid that he had but an indifferent opinion of the principles of the family at the Lodge, yet he did not think that it was the trifling fortune to which ſhe had a right, but the deſire of preventing an union between the young lady and Lord Andover, which had biaſſed their conduct.

" Then you *do* think," ſaid Mr. Ruffel, " that they were acceſſary to the misfor-
" tunes into which Miſs Montague was
" plunged?"

" My thoughts on the ſubject are ſo be-
" wildered," replied Mr. Barker, " that I
" ſcarce know what anſwer to return.
" Something was wrong amongſt them,
" but

" but I know not upon whom to reſt my " ſuſpicion."

Much more converſation paſſed upon the occaſion, and Mr. Ruſſel declared that as this laſt account had entirely invalidated that which he received from the gentleman at Jamaica to whom he had formerly applied, he would have the whole buſineſs inveſtigated, and every particular elucidated, before he would releaſe one ſhilling of the property over which he had any authority. But old Mrs. Percival was too politic to call him to any account: on the contrary ſhe declared that the money ſhould reſt in Mr. Ruſſel's hands till they were more perfectly acquainted with the circumſtances of her grand-daughter's deſtiny.

With the abovementioned report, neither Lord Andover nor Clifford had been made acquainted by the Spencers, as it was judged proper to defer the communication till the arrival which was ſoon expected, of the young

young men at the Aviary; and as it was not to be queſtioned but that Lord Andover would be deeply affected by the intelligence: his fixed good opinion of *Miſs Montague* ſeeming to keep his hopes alive in defiance of evidence and reaſon.

CHAP.

CHAP. CII.

The Diſcovery made known to the Spencers.

OUR couſin Fielding left us particular orders never to attempt a full deſcription of ſuch ſcenes as can only be portrayed by the imagination of a reader of quick and tender ſenſibility. We will therefore give only a ſketch of the effect which the communication of the preceding developement produced on the inhabitants of the Aviary.

The young Earl and his equally anxious friend arrived at the laſt ſtage of their journey about three o'clock in the morning: when thinking that it would be improper to reach Mr. Spencer's before the family were riſen from their beds, the gentlemen agreed to take that reſt of which they both ſtood greatly in need; the agitation of their ſpirits ſince the firſt peruſal of Millemont's letter

letter of intelligence, having prevented them from enjoying an uninterrupted and refreſhing ſleep from the period of that memorable event.

When our two friends reached the park of Mr. Spencer, they ſaw ſeveral parties ſtrolling about in different places; one of which they deſcried to be the three ſiſters; Lucy, Matilda, and Caroline. The young men now alighted, and walking after the ladies overtook them juſt as they had reached one of the little temples with which the place abounded. The uſual ſurpriſe at an unexpected meeting having ſubſided, and the uſual queſtions and anſwers being finiſhed, Clifford obſerved that his Lucy looked melancholy, and ſmiling, ſaid that he ſuſpected the *welcome* of himſelf and Lord Andover, at Spencer Aviary.

"Indeed your ſuſpicion is unjuſt," replied ſhe, with a bluſh; "but I muſt ac-
"knowledge my ſpirits are rather low."

"From any particular cauſe?"—with anxiety interrogated Clifford.

"Why

"Why—n—no"—ſhe anſwered with a degree of inſincerity and ſighed.

"Why that ſigh then, my dear Lucy?" —taking her hand, aſked he with concern.

Lucy burſt into tears.

The gentlemen were alarmed, and obſerving that ſome pearly drops had moiſtened the cheeks of the gentle Matilda, earneſtly entreated to know the cauſe of the apparent emotion.

Caroline was the only one who could anſwer. Her feelings were acute, and ſhe was extremely concerned, but her ſpirits were ſtrong. Speaking therefore with quickneſs, ſhe ſaid, "As, ſoon or late, the "cauſe of my ſiſter's ſorrow muſt be told, "it cannot anſwer any good end to defer "the communication. The once deareſt "friend of her heart—her beloved Miſs "Montague—"

"Miſs Montague! What of Miſs Mon- "tague! What of her!"—echoed from the "two gentlemen.

"*Her troubles are ended!*" ſaid Lucy

with a momentary heroiſm; and then, relapſing into native tenderneſs, ſhe wept afreſh.

Apprehenſive leſt the intelligence ſhould be real, Lord Andover ſat aghaſt without daring to aſk one queſtion, till Clifford demanded the author of her intelligence; expreſſing at the ſame time his hope that it was falſe.

"O! no;" replied ſhe. "It is—it is "too true. The information came from "Mrs. Mitchel, and *to* her from that ab- "horred Millemont!"

"*Thank Heaven!*" exclaimed the earl; at once relieved from his fears; "thank "heaven that you have no other ſource of "information."

"No *other* ſource of information Sey- "mour!"—replied Lucy with almoſt an "angry quickneſs. "But yes; I *have* "other."

"That your Miſs Montague was mar- "ried to Captain Millemont"—explained Mr. Clifford; "but my deareſt Lucy both "theſe

" theſe circumſtances are, I truſt, equally " falſe."

" *Falſe!*" echoed Lucy, while Matilda and Caroline ſat in ſilent wonder. " To " what does all this lead?"

" To the expreſſion of a hope," replied his Lordſhip, " that you will one day again ſee " the friend whom you ſo deſervedly hold " dear, *with a fame as unſpotted as her* " *mind.*"

We now ſummon to our aid the imagination of our gentle reader, which muſt aſſiſt in depicting the happineſs which Lucy experienced when ſhe was told that the friend of her heart, whom ſhe had lamented not only as dead but as diſhonoured (for her union with Millemont was diſhonour) was probably ſtill alive, and certainly poſſeſſed of ſpotleſs innocence. This gave her a joy which was almoſt inconceivable: but when ſhe was aſſured that her dear, innocent and living friend was her SISTER:—*the often and long lamented child of her parents and grandfather*—the true heireſs to

the Aviary, whoſe exiſtence would avert the impending and dreaded alteration in the ſituation of all thoſe who were moſt dear to her, her tranſport reached the utmoſt height of human bearing. No doubt was permitted to exiſt amongſt this happy party of the life of their Letitia, or of the certainty of her being found in conſequence of the inquiry which would be immediately inſtituted on the intereſting occaſion. They reaſonably conjectured that while from the ſearch of Millemont ſhe would only hide herſelf more deeply, to that made in the name of the Spencers ſhe would ſoon doubtleſs ſurrender herſelf with gladneſs.

Thus they reaſoned, and thus they believed; being too happy to ſee the gloomy ſide of the proſpect.

The joy of Matilda ſhowed itſelf in tears; that of Caroline in action: for while Lucy was almoſt fainting in the arms of her Frederic, Caroline obſerving Mr. Ruſſel, Mr. Barker, and Mr. George Abington at a diſtance, ſprang from her ſeat; ran to them,

them, and conducted them to the temple with—" Come along, come along, my " dear friends! come along!" With surprise they followed her steps, and with surprise beheld the scene before them.

As soon as the gentlemen last arrived were seated, Lord Andover took from his pocket-book the letter of Captain Millemont, and putting it into the hands of Mr. Barker, requested him to read it aloud.

It is unnecessary to say that the gentlemen were all greatly affected by the communication. As to Mr. Russel—his passion was almost uncontroulable; he seemed in a perfect frenzy; swore he would go himself to the West Indies in pursuit of the lovely exile, and appeared as if he wanted to set off that instant.

It was now agreed that Mr. Barker should go to the venerable Mr. Spencer and acquaint him, by himself, with the business of the moment, lest the agitation of his grand-children, united with the interest of the discovery, should be too much for him to support. Taking therefore the let-

ter with him Mr. Barker went to the ſtudy of the good man, and after ſome preparatory converſation acquainted him with the diſcloſure which had been made. But however guardedly the ſubject was introduced, or how fortified ſoever by religious philoſophy Mr. Spencer might be, the intelligence nearly overcame his ſpirits. The happineſs which would probably reſult from this event to one branch of his deſcendants, with the puniſhment and ſhame, which awaited the atrocious guilt of the other, ſo divided and convulſed his mind that the conflict was ſevere and almoſt too ſtrong for him. In the end, however, the gladneſs was predominant; for as he knew that his grand-daughter Eleanor had before been guilty of acts of turpitude, he hoped that the diſappointment, and the diſgrace ſhe muſt now neceſſarily incur (unſupported by the adulation with which a ſet of people aptly called time-ſervers, had of late poiſoned her mind and ſtifled the voice of her conſcience) would bring her to a due

ſenſe

ſenſe of her guilt and lead her to that ſincere repentance, which will waſh to perfect whiteneſs, ſins of the darkeſt dye. After the tribute of ſome ſighs for the approaching and merited fate of the Percivals, and a fervent prayer that upon the ruins of their temporal, their eternal happineſs might be fixed, he yielded to the ſunſhine which ſeemed to be diffuſing around his habitation, and at this criſis a ſervant appeared with a requeſt from Lord Andover, for permiſſion to attend him. The requeſt was inſtantly granted, and Mr. Spencer gave to "the dear ſon of his wiſhes" a fervent benediction. After this, he expreſſed a wiſh to be left by himſelf; deſiring that ſome excuſe might be made for his non-appearance at dinner, and that he might be ſent to after every one had been made acquainted with the important intelligence, as he thought that he had hardly ſufficient ſtrength to be preſent at the more general diſcovery.

Mr. Ruſſel was now returned from Mr.

Abington's, where he had communicated the particulars of Millemont's letter; and had defired his brother, fifter, and Mifs Abington (Mifs Martha being as ufual on a vifit to the Lodge) to repair to the Aviary, that their prefence might fuftain at the trying moment the fpirits of his niece Sophia. Mr. George Abington had likewife purfued the fame conduct with his lady, fo that only the father and mother of our heroine were ignorant of her being their daughter.

Mrs. G. Abington felt the forrow of a fifter for the deplorable errors of Mrs. R. Percival; but with the fame ideas which had fuggefted confolation to her grandfather, fhe, likewife, gave way to joy.

As foon as dinner was ended and the fervants withdrawn an almoft univerfal filence enfued. One looked upon another as if he would fay "who is to begin?" Mr. Edward Spencer perceiving the unufual ftrangenefs of the company, afked what was the matter; upon which Mr. G. Abington replied,

"Nothing

" Nothing my dear brother but what will, " I truſt, crown our general felicity." At this the ever lively Caroline aroſe from her ſeat, and going to Mrs. Spencer claſped her arms round her neck and ſaid " Oh! my " dear, dear mother! how happy ſhall we " all be."

Mrs. Spencer was ſurpriſed at this action of her daughter's, and earneſtly enquired the cauſe of her exclamation.

" Prepare yourſelf my dear child," ſaid Mr. Abington " for a ſurpriſe—a ſurpriſe " which will I hope, as George ſays, pre- " cede more felicity than, happy as you " have been, you have ever yet experienc- " ed. And now without farther preface, " will you brother undertake to read the " letter?"

" Yes," ſaid Mr. Ruſſell, " if my ne- " phew will change ſeats with me;" and thus placed Mrs. Spencer between her huſband and mother.

Mr. Ruſſel now began to read what

Millemont had written to Lord Andover, and proceeded, though not uninterrupted by expreſſions of joy at the probability of the ſuppoſed Miſs Montague's exiſtence, and the certainty of her perfect innocence and great merit, till he arrived at the part which mentioned the Captain's leaving the iſland of Jamaica. Stopping there, he ſaid, "Now Sophia arm yourſelf with forti-"tude."

"Why what is coming?" aſked ſhe.

"What can all this lead to?" exclaimed her huſband.

"Shall I proceed?"

"Yes; for we are all wonder and im-"patience."

Mr. Ruſſel continued, and when he came to the following paragrah, read ſlow and with energy.

—"*And from him I have indubitable* "*proofs—proofs which the laws of England* "*muſt admit and which conſequently muſt* "*confirm her right—that the loveliеſt woman*

"*in*

" *in the creation, whose affection is yours, and* " *whom you have so long known by the name* " *Harriet Montague, is no other than*"—

Mr. Russel again stopped, and said " I " am afraid to go on, for, Sophy, you al- " ready look pale."

" For heaven's sake! proceed," said she, " and stop no more."

He then continued—" *is no other than* " *the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Spen-* " *cer of the Shrubbery and the inconteſtible* " *heiress of Spencer Aviary, and all its do-* " *mains.*"

" IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!"—they both exclaimed in the same instant, almost breathless with emotion.

" *It is a fact my dear children*;" said Mr. Russel; while every eye round the table was filled with tears; " *The babe* " *whom you buried as your own, was the* " REAL *Harriet Montague*; *whose little* " *dead body was exchanged in the night by* " *the Percivals for that of your still living* " *beautiful Letitia.*"

Upon this, Mrs. Spencer, whoſe countenance, at the moment not even Hogarth could have portrayed, gave a faint ſcream and throwing her arms around her huſband, ſank, as if lifeleſs, upon his breaſt; while he, though ſcarcely able to ſupport her, preſſed her to his heart, with ſpeechleſs energy.

For ſeveral moments not a ſyllable was uttered in the room, but the language of hearts, which ſpoke in ſighs and ſobbings, was diſtinctly heard from every boſom.

At length Mrs. Spencer opened her eyes, and attempted to look at the ſurrounding friends, when ſeeing them all affected, ſhe again faintly ſcreamed; again claſped her huſband in her arms, and was then relieved by a ſudden burſt of tears.

"For Heaven's ſake! my deareſt love! "and for my ſake," ſaid Mr. E. Spencer, "endeavor—endeavor—" but he could not finiſh the ſentence; and not having the relief of tears which gave eaſe to the lady, was ſo oppreſſed that his breaſt heaved with

with a ſigh which ſeemed to rend his heart. Perceiving how much they were affected, Mr. G. Abington and Lord Andover aroſe and leading them to a ſofa, inſiſted on their drinking a large glaſs of Madeira, from which they were immediately ſenſible of benefit. Their friends now ſurrounded them, and mutual congratulations were given and received; but they did not venture upon any particular converſation. At length Mrs. Spencer expreſſed an earneſt deſire to ſee her *dear* grandfather, as ſhe emphatically termed him, for the excellent man was ſo ſincerely beloved and revered by all his family, that no happineſs ſeemed to them to be complete if he did not partake of it: but being told that he had been too much affected by the firſt communication to be preſent when the diſcloſure was made to her and his grandſon, and that he had deſired to be left by himſelf, ſhe ſaid that it was eaſy to imagine how his time had been employed; and my beſt readers will conjecture with this

this amiable woman, that he had been engaged, during the important interval in queſtion, in addreſſes to the Throne of Heaven.

Mr. and Mrs. Spencer now declared themſelves ſufficiently collected to hear whatever more it was neceſſary that they ſhould be told, reſpecting the intereſting ſubject. On this Mr. Clifford and Lord Andover went through all the foregoing important particulars; the repetition of which, however, agitated them even more than they expected.

After this, Mr. and Mrs. Spencer, and Mrs. G. Abington, went to the apartment of their grandfather, who received them with a tranquil countenance; his mind having been reſtored to its uſual equanimity. But his expreſſions and congratulations evinced the fervency of his joy: and his obſervations on the great and eventful diſcovery; his pointing to the obvious finger of a conſtant ſuperintending Providence,

dence, ſo expanded the hearts of his hearers that nothing but *ſilence* could *expreſs* their ſenſations.

" But oh! my ſiſter! my faulty ſiſter!" —at length Mrs. G. Abington exclaimed, " What *can* be done with my ſiſter!"

" Let us hope my dear Matilda," ſaid Mr. Spencer, " that this very event may " terminate in her final good, and contri- " tribute to her eternal intereſt. The Uni- " verſal Father cares for *all* His children. " He ſtudies the beſt happineſs of *every one.* " Not a ſingle creature is excluded from " the great ſcheme of His Providence. Be " not then *over* grieved at the infamy and " puniſhment which muſt neceſſarily over- " take her. You are ſiſter by nature, but " not by ſentiment. In your earlieſt years, " your characters were diſtinguiſhably dif- " ferent."

Much more converſation paſſed upon the great buſineſs of the day, but, as three fourths of our readers are heartily tired with the pious and the tender, we will re-

lieve

lieve them by adjourning to the tea-table, over which future proceedings were ſettled by univerſal agreement, this was the ſcheme.

Mr. Edward Spencer, Mr. Ruſſel, Mr. Barker and Lord Andover were to ſet out in a day or two for London, accompanied by Mr. G. Abington and Mr. Clifford, and the latter was to proceed to Windſor to requeſt for Lord Andover from Mr. Herbert, a letter of introduction to his brother in Jamaica. They were afterwards to proceed without any further delay to Falmouth, as the ſhip was to leave the coaſt of Cornwall in the latter end of the enſuing week. During the abſence of the four firſt mentioned gentlemen, Mr. Clifford and Mr. G. Abington aſſiſted by Mr. Herbert, who, it was not to be doubted, would readily undertake the taſk, were to go from one ſeaport to another to make inquiry of all the Weſt-India merchants, and of others, who during the period of the laſt two or three years had been to that quarter of the globe;

globe; and likewiſe to give inſtructions to thoſe who were going thither, with the promiſe of five thouſand pounds to any one who ſhould diſcover the lovely object of their ſearch. All this was to be conducted with the greateſt privacy of which the caſe admitted, that the Percivals might not be too ſoon apprized of the event.

Clifford preſſed to accompany his friend, but was ſo earneſtly entreated by him to continue in England to explore the coaſts, that he conſented to ſtay behind.

And now ſome of our querulous readers may perchance pronounce that it is very unlikely for theſe gentlemen to go to ſuch a diſtance to ſeek a perſon who was near at hand; as it was ſtrange that they ſhould not by ſome means or other know that ſhe was in the kingdom.

Without aſking by *what* means—without paying any attention to ſuch cavillers—How often in caſes of equal importance do we look widely round for events hidden

hidden from our eyes by only the tardineſs of a few hours! How often deſpair of receiving bleſſings which are ready prepared for us, and which, perhaps, we ourſelves are the means of keeping at a farther diſtance by an immoderate anxiety to poſſeſs them!

"I never ſhall be in ſuch a happy ſitua-
"tion," ſays the deſpairing Phelon, who is next day fixed in one much ſuperior, by an event of which twenty-four hours before he had no idea.

Our departed friends, acting, perhaps, as our guardian angels, ſmile upon each other, with heavenly benevolence, when they ſee the patience and reſignation of a ſuffering fellow-creature ſucceeded by gratitude for an unexpected turn of circumſtances; and are, doubtleſs, pleaſed to be the immediate miniſters of his happineſs.

Turn, therefore, you who are oppreſſed with grief, an eye of hope; of truſt; of reſt, on Him who marks all the circumſtances

ſtances of your life; who does not permit one event to befall you that may not conduce to your future good: nor with-hold what you term a bleſſing, which would not be finally injurious.

CHAP.

CHAP. CIII.

The Gentlemen ſail for the Weſt Indies.

THE party of friends at Spencer Aviary did not ſeparate till a late hour. Every diſagreeable idea was baniſhed; every hope encouraged: they ſuffered themſelves to look forward to the period when Letitia Spencer, as Counteſs of Andover, was to preſide in that happy manſion. Not with preſumption, did they preſs into futurity; not with ideas of triumphing over even the Percivals, but with the humble hope; the truſt; the confidence, which we have juſt now recommended to the afflicted; and they retired to reſt with the pureſt tranquillity.

Particulars reſpecting the intended voyage being ſoon arranged, we will ſeparate the four gentlemen from their friends, and without giving our readers the pain of witneſſing a ſolemn adieu, we will convey them

them to London. Here they received information from the owners of the veſſel, in which their paſſage had been ſecured, that ſhe would be ready for ſailing ſeveral days ſooner than it was expected, and that they had been under much concern at not knowing where to ſend to the gentlemen who where to ſail in her to Jamaica. This put them all in motion: carriages were immediately ordered, and Clifford accompanied them to the Land's-end; leaving Mr. G. Abington to tranſact buſineſs in London.

The critics may ſuppoſe that the premature ſailing of the veſſel from England, was a circumſtance too trifling to be mentioned: but let us remind theſe ſublime genii that ſmall cauſes are often productive of greater effects; that circumſtances, ſometimes, too minute for obſervation, frequently ſwell into events the moſt important of a man's life.

"Pay a due attention to trifles," ſays a certain Chriſtian philoſopher, "and ſet a "ſtrict guard over them; for at a ſmall "breach

" breach in the walls of a city, a whole " army pours in its numerous body. Great " matters demand not such a constant " watch, as they will secure an attention " to themselves by their own pressing im- " portunity."

We need not be told that the above observation is not directly in point with our subject, as it is a truth of which we ourselves are perfectly convinced. But as there was something in our story that brought the good counsel to our recollection, we chose to insert it, and presume to suppose that some one or other may be benefited by its appearance.

The premature sailing of the ship was the immediate cause of our gentlemen's leaving the English coast, for had it not gone till the time first fixed, Lord Andover, or at least Mr. Clifford, would have visited Windsor previous to their journey to the Land's-end, and then the occasion of their intended voyage would of course have been mentioned; and consequently have been

prevented

prevented by the diſcovery of its object. But as preſent circumſtances rendered the execution of that deſign inconvenient, Clifford ſent an expreſs to inquire of Mr. Herbert if he had anything to tranſmit to Jamaica, and to deſire a letter of introduction to his brother for Lord Andover. Clifford did not requeſt letters for the other gentlemen, as they were ſtrangers to Mr. Herbert, and as that for the Earl would anſwer the full purpoſe of the party. Mr. Clifford added that his friends waited the meſſenger's return for ſetting off; that he himſelf ſhould accompany them down into Cornwall, and upon his return, viſit Windſor, to conſult with Mr. Herbert on the occaſion of this voyage of the gentlemen, the ſtory being too bulky and indeed too complex to be made the ſubject of a letter.

How frequently do we ſay—"had it not "been for ſuch an accident, ſuch an event "had not happened!" And—had ſuch a "perſon gone ſooner on ſuch an errand, "ſuch

" ſuch and ſuch conſequences would have " enſued!"

But let us lift our minds a little higher than the preſent ſcene. We have before affirmed ourſelves to be anti-fataliſts; or in other words that we believe the children of men are endued with ſuch a portion of free-will, as enables them to accept the good, and to refuſe the evil which is placed before them; or to chuſe the evil and refuſe the good. We think, however, that there *is* a path prepared for us to walk in, which will aſſuredly lead us, if we turn not away from it, to happineſs; and that even if we do deviate from this right road and ſtray into the paths of vice, we may be again brought, though perhaps by a circuitous track, into that walk which unerring Wiſdom and unceaſing Mercy have provided for our footſteps. There are ſome events which, when their accelerating or preventing cauſes are known, we think might eaſily have been avoided or pro-

duced;

duced; but, which as circumſtances happened at the time, could not poſſibly have been either haſtened or retarded.

Thus it may be ſaid, "Had Lord Andover or Mr. Clifford ſeen Mr. Herbert "and communicated the buſineſs of the "moment—or had the latter mentioned "the names of the gentlemen who were "to have accompanied his friend, an "eclairciſſement muſt have taken place." But let it be conſidered that a journey to Windſor would at ſuch a preſſing moment have been extremely inconvenient, and according to all which was before them to determine their judgment, perfectly unneceſſary: for as Mr. Herbert was in a conſtant habit of correſpondence with his brother, it was not likely, engaged in buſineſs of conſequence as the gentlemen expected to be during their ſtay in Jamaica, that they could render him any material ſervice; nor was it eſſential that they ſhould even take a letter from him, as the Biſhop had written to his ſon Francis a circumſtantial ac-

count of the affair: and as to mentioning the names to Mr. Herbert of Mr. Ruſſel, Mr. Barker, and Mr. Edward Spencer,—where could be the utility of that? Secret as Clifford had been reſpecting his connections at Beverly, he could not ſuppoſe his brother to be acquainted with theſe names, and his own recommendation to Frank, independent of the Biſhop's, would have been perfectly ſufficient for the ſecuring of that gentleman's moſt friendly and zealous offices. The expreſs which was ſent to Windſor was in ſome meaſure a compliment; or at moſt an attention demanded by friendſhip from Clifford to his brother. As no one perſon therefore concerned in the tranſaction, could be juſtly charged with any improper conduct, it may, in this, and in many ſimilar caſes, be fairly inferred that ſuch an event *was* or *was not* to happen, without infringing upon the right of that free-will with which we believe the ſons of mortality to be endued. The exerciſe of patience; forgiveneſs, and

various

various other virtues: the ſubjugation of vice, with many reaſons at preſent unknown to us, may render ſeveral occurrences neceſſary, which it would be right in us to prevent, could we ſee thoſe incidents which, though ſurrounding us, and juſt on the point of happening, are hidden from our view. Theſe, then, may be called the works of fate; or, as we rather wiſh to expreſs ourſelves—the deſigns of Providence.

To ſome of our readers we feel an inclination to apologize for the foregoing reflections: but they are intended to anſwer the cavils of a ſet of trivial critics of the eighteenth century, who having no capacity to decide for themſelves, glean opinions from the light pamphlets of the times; and frequently approve on one day what on the day before they had unfortunately condemned. Taking leave, however (for we cannot ſtop to pay them much attention) of this fluttering yet noxious race of ani-

mals, we will waft ourſelves and our friends to the weſtern coaſt of the kingdom, and with that flight finiſh the one hundred and third chapter, of theſe our more than Herculean labors.

CHAP.

CHAP. CVI.

Mr. Clifford proceeds to Windsor.

AFTER a stay at Falmouth of a day and a half, Mr. Clifford took leave of his four friends, whom he left under sail for Jamaica; and after lingering on the shore till the topmast of their vessel vanished from his view, heaved a sigh of friendship, and returning to the inn, ordered a chaise for Truro. Impatient to exert his powers for the happiness of many who were dear to him, Clifford stopped not till he reached Basingstoke, at which place he indulged a few hours of sleep, intending immediately after this necessary refreshment, to hasten to Windsor. But his design was in some measure prevented by the circumstance of all the carriages of the place being engaged in consequence of the wedding of a rich heiress in the neighbourhood. He

was obliged therefore to wait ſo long for the return of one of the chaiſes, that he did not arrive at Mr. Herbert's till that gentleman, his lady, and our heroine were ſitting at their evening tea. The weather was fine, and their apartment, which was on the ſecond floor, and overlooked ſome beautiful gardens, extremely pleaſant. Mrs. Herbert and Letitia ſat on a ſofa near a window; Mr. Herbert on the other ſide of the tea-table. The lovelineſs of the ſcene had been the ſubject of their converſation, and Letitia with a tear upon her cheek, ſaid the oppoſite view brought to her mind one in which ſhe had always taken peculiar pleaſure at Spencer Aviary.

"I wiſh," ſaid Mrs. Herbert, "that "every ſcene at Beverly could be oblite-"rated from your remembrance. Will "you never, my dear Harriet, look for-"ward without a previous retroſpect?"

"Never can I forget the friends of my "earlier days," returned our heroine. "Never ceaſe to regret the neceſſity of a

"ſeparation

" ſeparation from thoſe who were—who " *are* dearer to me than anything elſe in " exiſtence. Accuſe me not, my kind " protectors of ingratitude when, I confeſs " that no ſubſequent affection can eradi- " cate that which took root in my infancy, " and increaſed with my increaſing years."

Mr. and Mr. Herbert uſed every effort to raiſe the depreſſed ſpirits of their lovely friend, and ſo well ſucceeded that they were converſing with tolerable cheerfulneſs when a ſervant announced Mr. Clifford, whoſe appearance gave pleaſure to each individual of the party.

After the uſual enquiries; uſual replies, and the general obſervations to which pleaſant weather and rural proſpects commonly give riſe—Mrs. Herbert began—" And ſo " Frederic your friend Lord Andover is " going to Jamaica!"

Clifford. He is. I ſaw the veſſel under ſail before I left the ſhore.

Mr. Herbert. What occaſions his voyage?

Clifford. A buſineſs in which you muſt aſſiſt. Love.

Mrs. Herbert. And that is a buſineſs in which I am ſure Mr. Herbert will be diligent; as I doubt not but the end of his deſign is matrimony.

Clifford. Certainly; and I pray to Heaven it may be ſucceſsful.

Mr. Herbert. You ſpeak feelingly brother. I preſume the incidents of this ſtory are affecting.

Clifford. More ſo than I can poſſibly expreſs. On the event of his purſuit depends the felicity of many of the beſt beings in this ſcene of exiſtence.

Mrs. Herbert. You intereſt us, Frederic. For goodneſs ſake begin your ſtory. Remember you promiſed us ſome information.

Clifford. And you ſhall have it: but I muſt premiſe that at preſent it muſt be kept a moſt profound ſecret.

Letitia riſing. Mrs. Herbert I will go with

with my little friends on their promiſed evening walk. By the time I ſhall come back—

Mrs. Herbert. My dear Harriet! have you no curioſity about love ſtories? For my part I am all impatience.

Letitia bluſhing. When important ſecrets—

Clifford. My dear Miſs Mansfield! I hope you include yourſelf in the number of thoſe who are to be truſted. And give me leave to ſay that did you know Lord Andover, you could not be ſo indifferent to his fate.

Letitia. Indeed Mr. Clifford, I am not indifferent to the happineſs of others, and if my ſtaying is not improper, I, likewiſe, will confeſs ſome degree of impatience to hear a ſtory which ſeems to be extraordinary.

Clifford bowing.] Some years back Lord Andover formed a tender attachment to a young lady who, by the accounts of all that ever knew her, was one of the moſt beautiful, moſt accompliſhed, and beſt of human

beings. Their affection was mutual; and indeed they were deſerving of each other: for it muſt be acknowledged that Lord Andover has not many equals.

Mrs. Herbert. Really I think ſo. For elegance of perſon, and manners, he ſtands unrivalled amongſt all our young noblemen.

Clifford. His mind ſurpaſſes his manners, and the beauty of his Miſs Spencer is ſaid to be greatly exceeded by her intellectual endowments.

Letitia with a ſigh.] Spencer! ſir. Is the lady's name Spencer?

Clifford. It is madam: Letitia Spencer. She is the eldeſt daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Spencer of the Shrubbery at Beverly.

Letitia. Letitia! Letitia Spencer! Lucy, ſure you mean!

Clifford. And do you then, Miſs Mansfield, know Miſs Lucy Spencer?

Letitia. I have heard ſir—I have heard —But pray go on!

Clifford. Letitia is ſiſter to Miſs Lucy; but

but they are ſtill more united by affection than by nature. The attachment of Lord Andover, then Mr. Seymour, for this moſt lovely—

Letitia. Seymour! Lord Andover! Mr. Seymour! Letitia—Lucy Spencer! Heavens! What—what—But I aſk pardon. Pray! pray! pray proceed!

Clifford. Allow me, my dear madam, to expreſs my aſtoniſhment at your exclamations and evident diſcompoſure. What can this portend? May I Miſs Mansfield—

Mrs. Herbert, in a tremulous voice.] Go on! go on, brother! You kill one with anxiety. Why do you aſk ſo many queſtions!

Mr. Herbert. Humour your ſiſter Frederic and proceed. She is in a fit of impatience.

Clifford. And I of ſurpriſe. But I obey. —The attachment of Lord Andover for this Miſs Spencer, who is heireſs to a moſt magnificent eſtate called Spencer Aviary, commenced at a very early age, and will, I

doubt not, continue throughout his exiſtence. But I muſt go ſtill farther back. When Letitia was about three years old, or I believe not quite ſo much, ſhe was ſent into the country for freſh air, in conſequence of her ſlow recovery from the hooping-cough. A family named Percival, who were next heirs to the Aviary eſtate, corrupted the nurſe who had the care of the child, and by her means exchanged it for a dead one, who, to the inexpreſſible concern of the Spencers, was buried as their own, while the living Letitia was conveyed away, and, by a deep ſtroke of policy, carried down ſome few years after into the ſame country, and educated under the name of the dead child, which was Harriet Montague.

The conſternation that now prevailed in this little party was, we are inclined to believe, greater than the greateſt orator or ableſt writer could deſcribe. The auditors were, for ſeveral moments, literally ſtruck dumb, and Clifford, who ſaw their amaze-

ment,

ment, was so surprised by the astonished countenances of his friends, that he was under the same silent influence. Mr. Herbert, at length impressed the air with his voice, by repeating in a tone between question and exclamation *Harriet Montague? ! !* —at the same instant that his lady, as if recovering from a stupor, said, "Good "Heavens! is it possible!"—receiving into her arms, at the same moment, the fainting Letitia, who, overcome by the violence of various emotions, sank senseless upon the bosom of her friend.

Clifford was now the person most amazed. Indeed he was so bewildered by rising ideas, that he stood motionless, till Mr. Herbert, said—"My dear brother, *that*— "THAT *is Miss Montague.*"

"That *Miss Montague!*"—repeated Clifford starting backward with surprise; "it is "impossible! Miss Mansfield HARRIET "MONTAGUE! It surely cannot be!— "Is she not the niece of Mr. Cumber- "land?!"

"His

" His *adopted* niece, was all I ever told " you," replied Mr. Herbert; who ſeeing Letitia continue lifeleſs, ſeated himſelf by her and ſupported her till the ſtrength of her emotions brought her back to conſciouſneſs, and ſhe broke into a torrent of tears.

It was ſcarcely poſſible for a greater variety of contending paſſions to tear the breaſt of a human being, than what now tortured that of the lovely Letitia Spencer. Her title to the Aviary, never gleamed upon her imagination. Love and friendſhip divided her whole ſoul. LUCY—her *friend!* —her SISTER!—Lucy, as Clifford's language evinced, NOT MARRIED!! conſequently SEYMOUR FREE—and *Seymour* FAITHFUL!!! Theſe were ſuch cauſes of joy—of tranſport, as ſubdued her ſtrength. But *Seymour was gone to Jamaica!* Yes; *but he was gone in purſuit of her!* Yet, *ſtill he was gone!* And what a length of time it muſt be before he *could* return!

Thus bleſt as ſhe was, even Letitia half repined

repined that ſhe was not bleſt ſtill more. Too frequently is this the caſe in life: but the piety and confidence of our heroine did not remain long unexerciſed. She lifted up her heart, and truſted in Him in whom ſhe had *often* truſted, and never in vain. After a ſhort period, ſhe requeſted a few minutes abſence, and retiring to her own apartment, ſoon found ſome degree of compoſure. And now her father, her mother, her venerable great-grandfather, with all her other relations and Beverly friends, had their turns in her affectionate remembrance, and added fervency to the thanks which ſhe offered at the Throne of Mercy; and ſo irradiated, by her employment, was her countenance, that when ſhe returned, ſhe appeared ſomething more than human.

During her abſence Mr. Clifford was informed of the circumſtances of her eſcape from Citron Grove, as well as with all ſubſequent events, and as ſoon as ſhe entered he ardently congratulated her; himſelf, and their mutual friends on the happy diſcovery,

covery, in terms expreſſive of the higheſt admiration and eſteem. Nothing could be more animated—more intereſting than the enſuing converſation; every individual ſeeming to be the perſon principally benefited. Clifford ſaid that he wondered at his own ſtupidity in ever ſuppoſing there *could* be *two* ſuch women in the world as Miſs *Mansfield* and Miſs *Montague*; that he ought to have known his ſiſter's friend to have been Seymour's Harriet, from her anſwering ſo exactly the deſcription which he had received of both her perſon; mind, and manners.

The circumſtances of the diſcovery were now adverted to, and Mr. Clifford, in whoſe hands one copy of the proceedings was placed, gave a tranſcript of Millemont's letter to Mr. Herbert, and then retired, from motives of delicacy, during the reading of it. The contents of the letter were very affecting to Miſs Spencer; and no parts more ſo than thoſe which evinced her tenderneſs for Lord Andover. During the time

time that Mr. Herbert was reading, ſhe hid her face in the boſom of her friend, while tears and bluſhes covered her lovely cheeks. We will leave the reader to imagine the ſenſations which ſhe experienced on the full diſcovery of the baſeneſs of the Percivals; on the explanation of the fabricated account of Lucy's marriage with Seymour, and on all the other material parts of Millemont's confeſſion.

When Clifford returned and ſome farther elucidation had taken place reſpecting what had been done by the Chancellor, Biſhop, &c. on the buſineſs in point, he expreſſed his deſign of ſetting off for Beverly immediately; but as the evening was pretty far advanced, and he had, of late, been much fatigued, he was prevailed upon to ſleep at Windſor, and to ſet off early in the morning. At the ſame time alſo Mr. Herbert determined upon returning to London, for the purpoſe of receiving the Spencers, who doubtleſs, upon the firſt intelligence of Letitia's being in England, would

would haſten to ſee her, as it would not be proper for her, at that criſis, to appear in the country.

Several agreeable ſcenes were now anticipated by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, Letitia and Mr. Clifford: the only idea which clouded the proſpect, being the abſence of Mr. E. Spencer; Mr. Ruſſel; Mr. Barker, and the young Earl; and this, they had hope, a few weeks would remove.

"I find Mr. Clifford, you are perfectly "acquainted with all the families at Be-"verly," obſerved Miſs Spencer.

"I am madam; and that acquaintance "has long conſtituted the greateſt part of "my happineſs."

"Pray Frederic what was the reaſon "that we never were informed of your hav-"ing ſuch valuable connexions?" aſked Mrs. Herbert.

"My dear Roſella I expected your "queſtion and am prepared for it. Thus "I anſwer it. When I was firſt intro-"duced into the admirable family of the "Spencers,

" Spencers, by the means of my intimacy " with my friend Seymour, my finances " were in too confined a ſtate to allow me " to inform you or my brother of my at- " tachment in it; as I was aſſured that " you would both generouſly inſiſt upon " incommoding yourſelves to facilitate my " wiſhes; and after the death of our un- " cle, your return was ſo continually ex- " pected, that I reſolved to delay the com- " munication till I could make it per- " ſonally."

" Very well brother: this pleaſes me, as " it evinces that you have a particular, as " well as a general attachment to that " neighbourhood," ſaid Mrs. Herbert.

" I *have* ſiſter," replied Clifford with a glow upon his face; " and I muſt requeſt " you to endeavour to prevail with your " lovely friend to give me her Lucy."

" My Lucy, Mr. Clifford! And is that " really the caſe?"

" It is indeed: and if you refuſe your " intereſt to my *ſiſter's* entreaty, I will ap-

" ply

" ply to Seymour," returned he with a ſmile.

" You need not, you need not," ſaid Letitia bluſhing, " ſeek any other advo-" cate than Mrs. Herbert. But I will " ſpare even her the trouble of entreaty, " for I am ſo delighted with the idea, that " I think the preſent moment gives me al-" moſt as much ſatisfaction as any of the " paſt."

" Moſt ardently do I thank you," ſaid he taking her hand; " for you have made " me the moſt gratifying, as well as the " higheſt compliment, I can poſſibly re-" ceive."

" From my heart I congratulate you," ſaid Mr. Herbert, " on your approaching " alliance with ſuch a family. But let me " aſk why you never mentioned this mat-" ter ſince our return, as you ſay you in-" tended to do?"

" For this reaſon. Very ſoon after I ſaw " you, I heard of *Miſs Mansfield*, and heard " of her in ſuch terms as convinced me [I

" can

" can now ſpeak freely] that you Roſella " wiſhed to unite in her the epithets of " friend and ſiſter; and when I *ſaw* her I " apprehended that under *ſuch* a prepoſ- " ſeſſion you would not ſee my Lucy to " advantage. As the family therefore of " the Spencers intended to be in town the " latter end of this month, my deſign was " to have you introduced to her as to a ca- " ſual acquaintance, that her excellent " qualities and amiable manners might " produce their uſual effect, by appearing " through an unprejudiced medium"— was Clifford's reply to Mr. Herbert's enquiry.

In this kind of converſation was the evening paſſed, and early in the morning the party left Windſor; Mr. Clifford for Spencer Aviary; Mr. and Mrs. Herbert with Miſs Spencer and the little ones for London.

CHAP.

CHAP. CV.

The Meeting of the Friends.

MR. HERBERT, waited upon his father as ſoon as he arrived in town, to acquaint him with their happineſs in the diſcovery of Letitia. The prelate partook of his joy, and proceeded with him to the Chancellor's, who requeſted that Mr. Herbert would aſſiſt in having every circumſtance which had occurred within his knowledge put into proper form and duly atteſted, leſt Miſs Spencer, who he underſtood had been for ſome months of age, ſhould die before ſhe was put into actual poſſeſſion of her eſtates; which ſhe could not be in the abſence of her father; ſo very particular had the bequeſt of old Mr. Charlton been worded.

Mr. G. Abington, to whom a meſſenger had been diſpatched, was the firſt of the family

family that recognised his lovely niece, who presented to her uncle the brother and sister of Mr. Clifford, and very sincere were the circulating congratulations.

At the Aviary, the knowledge of Letitia's existence and safety occasioned a tumult of joy, though a sigh heaved the bosom of Mrs. Spencer for the absence of her husband: but her grandfather, always present to rectitude upon the most arduous occasions, soon reconciled her to this circumstance, by leading her view to his return.

It was now settled that the family should set off for London in the morning, and that during their absence, Mr. and Mrs. Abington, with Emily and Patty, should reside at the Shrubbery, lest the Percivals, catching some intimations of what had occurred, should enter upon any extraordinary measures.

When Mr. E. Spencer, Mr. Russel, Mr. Barker, and Lord Andover left Beverly, an idea prevailed that they were going upon a visit

viſit to his Lordſhip's eſtate in Ireland, and this idea was not contradicted; and now the goſſips in the neighbourhood raiſed a report that buſineſs relative to the marriage of Lucy and Mr. Clifford occaſioned this journey of the family. Even Patty Abington was ſuffered to remain in this error, as it was not deemed ſafe to truſt her with the true cauſe of the expedition, it being juſtly apprehended that ſhe would divulge it to Mrs. R. Percival.

As Mr. Spencer could not travel very expeditiouſly, it was agreed to make two days of the journey to London; but the good man whoſe ſtudy it was to promote the felicity of others, obſerving the impatience of Lucy; propoſed that ſhe, with Mr. Clifford, ſhould complete it in one, becauſe as he kindly obſerved, too many affecting interviews at one period might be too much for the ſpirits of the dear girl whom they were all ſo eager to embrace.

Lucy ſaw her grandfather's deſign and bluſhed as ſhe thanked him for the propoſal;

posal; which her mother permitting her to accept, she set off in a chaise and four at an early hour, and in the evening pressed with unspeakable rapture, her Letitia—her *sister*—her FRIEND to her heart.

There are in this world many of both sexes, who talk a great deal about friendship, without having one requisite in their composition to experience it. Two ladies who are in the habit of visiting each other—who love plays and assemblies—are fond of fashion and scandal, and often play a pool or a rubber at the same table, deem themselves bosom friends, and tell each other their little secrets of *amusive gallantry*. But will this commerce stand the trial of calamity? Will either vindicate the other when her reputation is unjustly attacked? Will she enjoy the praises given to her absent companion with greater satisfaction than if they were bestowed upon herself? Is she more pleased to spend an hour with her,

alone, than to paſs the time in a crowd of diſſipation? If ſhe can give a hearty affirmation to theſe queſtions, ſhe may congratulate herſelf upon meriting the higheſt of all human diſtinctions—that of a real friend.

To gentlemen, we have on this occaſion, but little to ſay, as their friendſhips are uſually founded on an equal love of a bottle or a bowl; a fondneſs for a race, a chace or a gun. But let an election for a member of parliament be in view—or only let one be a more celebrated markſman than the other, and the friendſhip not ſimply diſappears, but gives place to virulent and irreconcileable enmity.

Friendship is a vital ſpark—an emanation from Divinity; and can preſide in its genuine purity only in thoſe breaſts that are free from guile. We do not by that aſſertion confine it to ſinleſs perſons, for then no mortal could be ſuppoſed to taſte of its ſweets. The guile we here mean is that cool,

cool, deliberate, principle of which few, if any, of our readers are conſcious; as thoſe people who are truly ſaid to be guileful, are generally too intent upon ſome plan to injure a neighbour or a relation, to loſe any time in the peruſal of books ſo foreign as ſome muſt be to their purpoſe. There *are* hearts in the world that know what friendſhip is: there *are* hearts in the world that do not. To the firſt, a deſcription of what Letitia and Lucy Spencer felt at the moment of their meeting, would be unneceſſary; to the laſt, it would altogether be uſeleſs.

We therefore cloſe the ſcene.

The introduction of the Herberts to Miſs Lucy Spencer was a pleaſant incident to all concerned; and Frederic had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing his ſiſter as well pleaſed with his choice, as if her wiſhes of a ſiſter had been gratified in *Miſs Montague.*

Lucy continued with her ſiſter in Pall Mall till the next day, when Mr. and Mrs. Herbert and Mr. Clifford accompanied them to Groſvenor-ſquare, to the houſe of Mr. Spencer; or rather, of Letitia; for it was a part of the eſtate entailed by Mr. Charlton. Till the laſt fifteen years it had been under leaſe, but when the term was expired, Mr. Spencer furniſhed it for the uſe of his family. Mr. G. Abington had, of courſe, made it his reſidence ſince his arrival in London, and he now received the company from Pall Mall with an elegance ſuited to the happy occaſion.

About ſix in the evening, the arrival of the reſt of the family from Spencer Aviary created freſh emotions. Mr. Spencer when he ſaw his lovely deſcendant, of whom, as has been ſaid, he had always been particularly fond, was melted to the ſoftneſs of infancy. He wept over her as ſhe kneeled before him, with a tenderneſs which for ſome time he in vain endeavoured to ſuppreſs,

preſs. But at length collecting himſelf, he gave her his bleſſing in ſuch pious and exalted terms as affected all the company. Letitia, who had always loved him with a kind of adoration, had flown to him, upon his firſt approach, with open arms; ſhe then dropped upon her knees at his feet, and begged his benediction.

On the tenderneſs of the mother with her long loſt daughter folded to her boſom, we purpoſely omit to enlarge. It was oppreſſive joy which ſhowed itſelf in the likeneſs of grief.

"My LETITIA!"

"My MOTHER!"—was all that paſſed of language upon the occaſion.

Matilda and Caroline were very differently affected at this firſt interview with their ſiſter. One cried and laughed by turns; the other cried only, and that in perfect ſilence. Mrs. George Abington embraced her lovely niece with almoſt the affection of a mother.

The acknowledgments of the family to Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, were unbounded. Lucy had a double attachment to the ſiſter of her Clifford; and indeed the whole party ſeemed united by the cloſeſt ties of amity.

Mr. George Abington ſent Letitia's duty to her grandfather, grandmother, and aunt Emily, it not being deemed ſafe for her to make her own offering, on account of Miſs Martha, who might have taken umbrage, and imbibed ſuſpicion from the paſſing of many letters to the contents of which ſhe was not made privy.

Mr. Herbert, Mr. Clifford, and the Biſhop of Chicheſter all wrote by different conveyances to Mr. Frank Herbert in Jamaica, that the voyagers might have the earlieſt intelligence poſſible of the ſubject of their anxiety. Mrs. Spencer, therefore, and Letitia encouraged themſelves with hope—the one expreſſed, the other ſilent—that a ſhort time would unite them to the

deareſt

dearest objects of their affection; for surrounded by kindred and kindness, as she was, the lovely maid, with a conscious blush, found in the absence of Seymour an occasion of continual regret; but she tried to deceive herself into a belief that the greatest part of her anxiety was caused by a wish to see her father; nor were Mr. Russel and Mr. Barker forgotten in the account, when she summed up the causes of her solicitude.

The Bishop of Chichester and the Chancellor visited Mr. Spencer on the day after his arrival in Grosvenor-square; and the necessity of Letitia's immediately making a will for the disposal of the estate being discussed and clearly explained, she was desired to give her instructions for the drawing up of the deeds in the proper form. To this request she replied that she gave every thing to the disposal of her great-grandfather, whose right she regarded as far superior to her own. The venerable man

was deeply affected by this inſtance of her love and duty: but he earneſtly endeavored to perſuade her to make a more ample uſe of her powers. To his inſtances on this ſubject her only anſwer was, that whatever papers he ſhould direct to be laid before her, ſhe would ſign with perfect ſubmiſſion, but that nothing could juſtly be called *her will*, which did not inveſt him with the entire command of the property. Every one admired this declaration, and the lawyers proceeded ſo expeditiouſly to buſineſs, that in two days all the deeds were ready for the ſignatures, and Mr. Spencer executed a new will in conſequence of the power veſted in him by his great-grand-daughter.

After all matters of form were finiſhed, his lordſhip the Chancellor propoſed that Taylor and his wife ſhould be ſummoned into the preſence of Miſs Spencer. This was accordingly done, and the moment the woman ſaw her ſhe burſt into a paſſion of tears

tears and ſaid, "*That, that is my dear "young lady! O! I ſhould know her amongſt "ten thouſand!*"

Millemont's letter addreſſed to the Percivals, with the information of our heroine's exiſtence and unſullied purity, and retracting his former fabricated account, was now put into the poſt-office, and its arrival at the Lodge cauſed the greateſt perturbation in the family. Old Mrs. Percival, accompanied by her ſon, ſet off poſt for Chelſea, to re-ſecure Taylor and his wife to their intereſt by ſome new invented offers of proviſion for themſelves and their family. When the mother and the ſon alighted at the door of the cottage and found it empty, they were exceedingly alarmed, and their alarm increaſed upon obſerving the ſtate of the little garden near it, which evinced that the place had for ſome time been vacant, as ſeveral depredations had been committed upon a ſpot which uſed to be kept in remarkable order. The gentleman and

lady now enquired at another cottage at ſome little diſtance, but could not receive the leaſt information of the people whom they wanted, and after two or three unſucceſsful viſits, were obliged to ſubmit to their diſappointment. In the mean time their houſe at Beverly was a ſcene of new commotion, for the Mr. Montague whom we once before introduced to the acquaintance of our readers as the brother of the gentleman who married Mr. Percival's ſiſter, now made a very unwelcome viſit to the Lodge, in company with a woman who had been nurſe to the little Harriet, at the time that the Captain and his lady left their infant an orphan. This woman who had been diſcharged by Mrs. Percival upon the death of her daughter, going into the houſe ſoon after, for ſome trifle which ſhe had neglected to take with her, ſaw the infant juſt then dead, but having no further buſineſs in the family, knew nothing of any circumſtance relative to its funeral.

Some

Some time after this, ſhe ſaw the Mr. Montague whom we now a ſecond time uſher upon our theatre, and told him all the occurrences relative to the family of her late maſter. On this information he viſited old Mrs. Percival, as was ſhown in its due place, to demand the property of his deceaſed brother: but the old lady ſo effectually ſilenced him at that time, by convincing him that when the ſervant ſaw the child ſhe was only in a fit, and that ſhe was then living and well at Hampſtead, that being of a careleſs diſpoſition as to pecuniary matters, and not knowing where to find the young woman, whom he had only met by accident, he made himſelf quite contented, and returned to his ſhip, in which he ſoon after ſailed to the Eaſt Indies; and to this diſtant place he afterwards made ſeveral voyages during the ſpace betwcen the period laſt mentioned and that at which our hiſtory is now arrived. On his return to England, about a week before he viſited Be-

verly, he went to a public houſe in Wapping, where he was aſked by the landlady if his name were not Montague, and anſwering in the affirmative, ſhe told him that ſhe was the perſon who lived in his brother's family at the time of his and his lady's deceaſe. This brought on an eclairciſſement reſpecting the child, which upon her poſitive aſſertion that ſhe ſaw it abſolutely dead, produced their journey to the Lodge.

When Mrs. R. Percival heard Mr. Montague's errand, ſhe was ſo agitated by fear and anger that ſhe could not help diſcovering to the cunning Mrs. Mitchel more than the family wiſhed to communicate: but on the appearance of Mr. Stephen ſhe affected ſome indifference and gave the gentleman a direction to her huſband and mother in town, who, ſhe told him would give him entire ſatisfaction reſpecting the buſineſs which had occaſioned his journey into the country. She ſaid that ſhe was

under

under a neceſſity of going a ſhort diſtance from home; but that her ſon would accommodate him with whatever might be agreeable to him during his ſtay at Beverly. He ſaid that he ſhould only beg a birth for himſelf and his companion that night, as he meant to ſteer his courſe back again as ſoon as it was light. His requeſt was civilly complied with, and Mrs. R. Percival, ordering her carriage, ſet off poſt for the metropolis, that her huſband and his mother might have information of Mr. Montague's claim previous to his appearance in Hatton Garden, that being the town-reſidence of the Percivals.

When ſhe reached London, her embaſſy cauſed freſh diſturbance to the parties concerned, who, however, ſoon agreed that at this important criſis, the beſt method would be to affect a contempt for the paltry ſum, and, to prove their diſintereſtedneſs, offer to give up the whole of the late Captain Montague's effects; for they feared that a public trial, which the claimant ſeemed determined to

hazard,

hazard, might produce disagreeable consequences. Accordingly, when the honest tar arrived, Mr. Percival assumed the utmost *sang froid*, and showing him the account offered to refund the whole, saying that his niece, if she was still living, should find a friend in her mother's family, though disowned and oppressed by that of her father.

Mr. Montague was highly offended by this inuendo, and said, that either his niece was, or was *not*, in being: that if she *was* in the land of the living, she should not only have her own, but his fortune into the bargain: and that if she were dead, he should expect the interest, as well as the principal of what his brother left.

Mr. Percival replied, that he was so determined that his niece, of whom he was as fond as of his own children, should not owe obligation to any one but himself, that he would go so far as to add two hundred pounds to the original eight, by way of interest, and that if Mr. Montague did not

not like thoſe terms he might ſeek his remedy.

The unconcern which Mr. Percival aſſumed as he uttered theſe words, had the deſired effect. The artleſs tar believing Mr. Percival's indifference to be real, and thinking that a worſe offer might be made, cloſed with the propoſal; received bills for the thouſand pounds, and gave a general releaſe for all his brother's property.

With the concluſion of this buſineſs, the Percivals were very well ſatisfied; and on a pecuniary account they had good reaſon to be ſo; for the little fortune of which Captain Montague died poſſeſſed, was doubtleſs the juſt property of his brother, and they certainly ought to have been accountable for full eighteen years intereſt. But the buſineſs produced conſequences, of which they were not aware: for ſome inadvertent expreſſions which dropped from Mrs. R. Percival, added to her apparent fright

fright and expedition to town, infuſed ſtrange ſuſpicions into the mind of Mrs. Mitchel; and this cunning woman ſoon obtained by her artifices from Mr. Stephen, who was induced to ſuppoſe her in the ſecret of the tranſaction, all the information which ſhe wiſhed to obtain. A diſagreable report alſo prevailed throughout the neighbourhood; for the inquiries which Mr. Montague made at the inn, before he went to the Lodge, had raiſed in the minds of the people ſuch a jumble of ideas, as gave birth to a ſuſpicion of crimes little ſhort of murder.

When old Mrs. and Mr. Percival undertook their journey to London, Mr. Abington communicated the circumſtances to his ſon, that Letitia might keep at home; and no accident produce an unſeaſonable and unpleaſant rencounter. He gave an account likewiſe of Mr. Montague's appearance at Beverly, which had excited ſo many conjectures in the vicinity, that Mr. Abington

ton thought it incumbent upon him to get all the intelligence which he could procure upon the ſubject; and the fruits of his inquiry were ſufficient to inform him of Mr. Montague's errand into the country, and of the place of his reſidence in town.

The receipt of Mr. Abington's firſt letter occaſioned the removal of the Spencer party to the Biſhop's palace in Suſſex, at which place they had been ſolicited by the Prelate and Lady Herbert to ſpend a few days. Miſs Bridget was at this time gone with a party to Stratford in Buckinghamſhire, or it is probable that ſhe would have added to the company and leſſened their enjoyment.

The ſecond letter to Mr. George Abington from his father, was laid before the Chancellor, who adviſed an immediate application to Mr. Montague and the Wapping Landlady, as likely to furniſh farther proofs, both preſumptive and poſitive, *in fa-*

vor of the cauſe, ſhould the Percivals determine to hazard a trial.

After ſeveral days ſpent with the Biſhop and his lady, in the moſt pleaſant manner, our ſocial company returned to London, having received intelligence that the party from the Lodge had left it. Mr. Abington added, that the whole family appeared extremely elated; that great preparations were declaredly going forward for the entrance into Spencer Aviary, and that Miſs Bullion, in particular, had employed half the workwomen in the neigbourhood in making new clothes to add to the abundant ſtock which ſhe had ordered from London.

Upon their return from Chicheſter palace the Herberts ſtaid all night in Groſvenor Square, but Clifford retired to his lodgings, where he was much ſurpriſed to find ſeveral letters, as he had ordered them to be ſent to Mr. Spencer's, and forwarded with thoſe conveyed from thence to the Biſhop's. Sitting down to peruſe their contents,

tents, he was not only ſurpriſed, but on account of the delay, greatly concerned to find the following from Lord Andover.

"Milford Haven.

"Clifford, my dear Clifford! I am to "my inexpreſſible regret, again landed "upon the Britiſh ſhore, but my whole ſoul "is in the Weſt Indies, and the impatience "with which I am torn, ſets at defiance "every ſuggeſtion of philoſophy. I hope "indeed that the accident which occaſions "my writing at this period upon Engliſh "ground, will not be the cauſe of a much "longer delay, as the carpenters aſſure us "that our veſſel which has been greatly "damaged, will be perfectly refitted by the "end of this week. At one period we "were in ſuch imminent danger of going "to the bottom that I am convinced it is "the higheſt criminality in me to regret "the ſafety of our preſent ſituation. This

"I am

" I am told fifty times in a day by Mr.
" Ruſſel; Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Barker,
" and conſcious as I am of its truth, it
" makes me feel angry with ſome of the
" deareſt friends I have in the world. But
" they are not in love: you, Frederic, are;
" and therefore can be convinced that there
" is a wide difference between even the
" tendereſt anxiety of a father, or the kind-
" eſt ſolicitude of friends, AND the ardent
" ſenſibility of what only merits the appel-
" lation of affection; *that* being a com-
" pound of every noble paſſion and princi-
" ple in the breaſt of man. It is impoſſible
" that he who truly loves can be a villain.
" I think what our great bard ſaid of him
" who has not muſic in his ſoul, is equally
" applicable to the being who has no
" affection.

" My Harriet! My LETITIA!!—for that
" name is ſtill dearer than the firſt; har-
" monious to my ſenſes as that ever was!
" Perhaps the pain which has of late ac-

" companied

" companied that ſound, gives the other,
" which brings her to my heart in all her
" native lovelineſs of perfect innocence, the
" pre-eminence.

" Oh! my Letitia!—my Letitia Spen-
" cer!—what would I not give to know the
" region thou doſt now inhabit! For that
" thou *doſt* exiſt, I muſt believe, or not ex-
" iſt myſelf!

" But Clifford, you will ſay I rave, and
" will ſuppoſe my intellectuals are impaired.
" Yet let me recal the ſentence, and aſk
" your excuſe for its injuſtice: *you* will
" only ſay *I love:* but to love in *my preſent*
" *ſituation,* is nearly the ſame as to be
" mad.

" It was my intention to have ſent this
" letter with the poſt now paſſing the win-
" dow at which I write; but to-morrow
" will do as well as to-day, for it is not poſ-
" ſible for you to reach this place before the
" promiſed time of our re-ſailing, were you
" diſpoſed to do ſo; *ſcarcely* poſſible is it

" for

" for a letter to arrive. Write however " half a dozen lines and direct to me on " board the Eagle West Indiaman. If it " do not come in time, I will leave orders " for its re-conveyance to you.

" The accident—I had almost forgotten " to explain it—which occasioned our re- " turn, was the vessel's springing a leak " after we had left the land about two days. " At first, the carpenter thought he could " easily heal the breach, but it proved be- " yond his cure: and it was deemed abso- " lutely necessary to steer back, when a " sudden storm arose and drove us hi- " ther.

" I think it may be best not to mention " this circumstance at the Aviary, lest it " should give undue concern to the anxi- " ous friends of my Letitia—my Letitia " Spencer!

" By my life Clifford I know no joy " equal to that of having occasion to men- " tion her name either in conversation or

in

" in writing; in which latter ſpecies of
" pleaſure I continually indulge, as my pen
" is conſtantly employed in ſomething re-
" lative to her whenever I take it in my
" hand; and this, as from my original bias,
" you will ſuppoſe, is not ſeldom. Rhyme,
" proſe, and blank verſe rule me by turns.
" Once [it was a wretched hour!] I wrote
" her epitaph! But let me fly from the re-
" membered horror, and ſay that it was
" ſucceeded by an epithalamium; ſuch a
" one as I fancied that you would produce
" upon the joyful—thrice joyful occaſion.
" Do Clifford, exert your poetical talents,
" and *begin* to compoſe ſomething on the
" ſubject. I will return you the compli-
" ment with *more* than brotherly cordiality.
" When I am not writing of my Letitia, I am
" talking of her with theſe our friends, who
" indulge me—or rather themſelves—in
" making her a continual theme. Some
" excellence or ſome beauty, or ſome grace
" is conſtantly recollected by firſt one

" then

" then another of us, till her next-to-Di-
" vine image is placed in ſuch vivid—*liv-*
" *ing* colors that I ſnatch myſelf from com-
" pany to enjoy, in retirement, my contem-
" plations; anticipate our meeting and in
" idea, ſee riſing joy break over her lovely
" countenance; then take up my pen and
" write as the muſe, if any one attends
" on me, gives direction.

" Oh Clifford! Clifford!—*But if I ne-*
" *ver again ſhould behold her!!!*

" Oh Clifford! Clifford!—is all I can
" write at this time.

" ANDOVER."

The peruſal of this letter threw Frederic into almoſt a frenzy. *Had* he not left London!—*Had* the letters been forwarded according to his direction!—In ſhort, had that happened which did *not* happen, he would have ſeen his friend before he was

again

again launched upon that wide domain "which bears no traces of a traveller's foot." He determined however to haſten to the Weſtern ſhore, though he could hardly flatter himſelf with the poſſibility of reaching it in due time, and unmindful of his friend's intimation reſpecting ſecrecy, wrote a note incloſing Lord Andover's letter to Mr. G. Abington, and mentioning his determination inſtantly to ſet off for Milford Haven. This packet he left with a ſervant to convey to Groſvenor Square early in the morning, and then mounting his horſe, for the conveyance of a carriage was too tardy, flew acroſs the iſland; ſending before him, that he might not wait one moment, to order a relay of horſes. When he arrived at the place of his deſtination, he inquired, almoſt breathleſs, if the Eagle Weſt Indiaman was in port, and was nearly petrified by the information that ſhe had ſailed the evening before. He ſpoke not; ſtirred not from the ſpot, till another ſailor contradict-

ed the account by one ſtill more vexatious —that ſhe was deſtined to ſail the laſt evening, but had waited for the morning's tide, and had left the offing only a few hours before. Conſcious as he was that he had not waſted a ſecond of time, yet was his reaſon, at that criſis, too powerful to repreſs additional concern at his not having been able to reach the place *a few hours ſooner!!* and for the firſt time in his life, Clifford repined *at things as they are.*

" Why were not horſes ſwifter !" Why " could there not be for man a more ex- " peditious mode of conveyance, from one " place to another !" " Every beaſt of the " foreſt—every bird of the air—how much " ſuperior were they in this reſpect to *man!*" " This was the ſubſtance of Clifford's mental converſation. But with how much more juſtice might he have ſaid—" Vile in- " grate man! Thou, for whoſe happineſs " even angels watch, and Providence pro- " vides ! Thou, for whoſe uſe, myriads of creatures

" creatures ſwarm, on earth; in ſeas; in
" air!—for whoſe reception, Heaven opens
" wide, and whoſe ſalvation is the Will of
" GOD—ſhalt *thou* repine; thou to rebel,
" thou to refuſe the offered bleſſings of a
" Father's Love, which due ſubmiſſion,
" and humble hope will ſurely bring to
" thee in time!"

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

T. Gillet, Printer, Salisbury Square.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 051398151